

Canada backs Arabs opposing carbon tax

RIYADH (AP) — Canadian Energy Minister Bill McKnight said Sunday he opposed carbon taxes, suggested by Europe and the United States and denounced by oil-producing nations. "Canada and Saudi Arabia have a similar position on the carbon tax," Mr. McKnight told a news conference. "It is a discriminatory tax." He said there were "more efficient ways" of caring for the environment than imposing such a tax. Saudi Arabia and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been outraged by the European Community's proposal to tax all carbon fuels, both for environmental reasons and to raise extra revenue. The tax would start at \$3 a barrel of oil and reach \$10 by the year 2000. President Bill Clinton, meanwhile, has proposed an energy tax which would eventually levy about \$3.50 on each barrel of imported oil. The Saudi-led GCC has been contemplating retaliatory action in the event the taxes were imposed. The Canadian minister is in Saudi Arabia to promote business for Canadian companies in the oil-rich region. He arrived Thursday, accompanied by representatives of leading Canadian companies of the petroleum processing and engineering, and mineral sectors.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية ثقافية بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Sheikh linked to blast had Iran tie — report

NEW YORK (R) — Investigators looking into the World Trade Centre bombing have uncovered a financial link between Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman and Iran's delegation to the United Nations, according to U.S. News and World Report. The magazine, quoting Middle East intelligence sources as reporting that Sheikh Abdul Rahman, the blind cleric whose mosque was attacked by several of the suspects indicted for the blast, regularly received large sums of money from the Iranians. Sheikh Abdul Rahman, who has denied any connection to the February 26 blast, which killed six people and injured over 1,000, has in the past denied receiving funds from Iran. The magazine, quoting separate unidentified sources, said the sheikh was also supported by funds forwarded to him from Cairo by one of his ex-wives. The intelligence sources told the magazine the sheikh, who is fighting deportation from the United States, sent some of his cash to Cairo, where it was used to finance extremist activities. His pipeline was exposed, the magazine said, when Egyptian police caught one of his couriers.

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Parties give Rabin one more week to solve crisis

TEL AVIV (R) — The leftist Meretz faction gave Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin one more week Sunday to solve a cabinet crisis overshadowing Arab-Israeli peace talks. Meretz Minister of Absorption Yair Tsaban said his faction agreed to the extension when Mr. Rabin made it clear he would ask for no further time. "He (Rabin) repeated that if by next Sunday, in another week ... another arrangement agreeable to us is not found ... the agreement we reached will take effect," Mr. Tsaban told army radio. "Even if the meaning is that the government for an interim period will have to depend on the support of only 61 members of Knesset (parliament) the prime minister will keep his word and implement that arrangement," Mr. Tsaban added.

Sudan accuses rebels of breaking ceasefire

KHARTOUM (AP) — The Sudanese government Sunday accused rebels of breaking a two-month ceasefire shortly after peace talks between the two sides broke off with no agreement. Major General Mohammad Abdullahi Oweida, Sudanese army spokesman, said rebels from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) loyal to John Garang have killed three government troops in the past five days. He said the two soldiers were killed when they drove over land mines planted by the insurgents in Equatoria state in the south. Another soldier was killed in SPLA shelling of the government-held town of Luka in the same state.

Rafsanjani defends his economic record

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, facing presidential elections next month, Sunday defended his government's "unprecedented" economic record over the last four years. Mr. Rafsanjani, quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA, said economic growth had reached 8.3 per cent, unemployment had fallen to 11 per cent from 14.9 per cent, and imports of wheat had halved since 1989 despite a population increase. "I think what has been done over the past few years regarding the consolidation of the economic infrastructure of the country has been unprecedented throughout history," IRNA reported Mr. Rafsanjani as telling a news conference.

German president urges no violence over asylum limits

BONN (R) — German President Richard von Weizsäcker Sunday urged protesters to avoid violence when parliament meets this week to pass a controversial law aimed at limiting immigration by restricting political asylum rights. In a rare statement on a planned political rally, Mr. Weizsäcker called for calm from up to 10,000 demonstrators expected to convene on Bonn Wednesday for a decisive final debate in parliament's lower house. "Any attempt from outside to put pressure on the lower or upper house of parliament with illegal means or even violence would only be an assault on our constitution," he said.

Eritrea born as Africa's newest state

ASMARA (R) — The Republic of Eritrea became Africa's newest independent state at midnight Sunday under the leadership of the man who led its long secessionist war with Ethiopia. President Issayas Afewerki was elected head of state on Saturday by the Eritrean National Council, the new country's transitional ruling body. He immediately pledged that Eritrea will be a democratic state. "The guarantee and continuation of democracy and democratic institutions are the pillars of law and the establishment of a constitutional government. These are the priorities of our future work," he said, according to the voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea radio. Mr. Afewerki is the leader of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

Red Cross demands end to Israeli abuse of Palestinian rights

Sommaruga reaffirms Fourth Geneva Convention applicable to W. Bank, Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The president of the Red Cross met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Sunday and demanded that the Jewish state end human rights violations in the occupied territories. Meanwhile, the Israeli government voted to accept a modest investment proposal for the occupied territories as purchasing power in the occupied Gaza Strip dropped to zero, Israel Radio reported.

Red Cross chief Cornelio Sommaruga cited Israel's closure of the occupied West Bank and Gaza, the recent rash of army killings of Palestinian civilians, army house demolitions and tough conditions in Israeli detention camps in the occupied territories. Mr. Sommaruga told reporters after the one-hour meeting that he demanded "quite firmly" that Israel apply all provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention which protects people under occupation.

Israel contends that it observes the humanitarian spirit of the convention, but that the status of the West Bank and Gaza has yet to be determined as occupied. Mr. Sommaruga rejected the argument Sunday, saying the provisions clearly apply to the occupied territories.

The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said the most pressing issue was the high number of civilian deaths. In a one-week period this month, 13 Palestinians were killed by Israeli soldiers, including a toddler, a 10-year-old and a 13-year-old.

"I consider that using live ammunition is a serious problem, particularly when we see the consequences, with many people killed, particularly children," he said. He also said the army practice of demolishing houses where wanted Palestinians hide out was a "provocation."

Since the start of the Palestinian uprising against occupation in December 1987, Israeli troops and civilians have killed 1,112 Palestinians, and Israeli human rights observers say 65 were aged 14 and younger.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman, Gad Ben-Ari, said the killings of civilians were "a tragedy" and that the government was "very sorry about it." But Mr. Rabin told Mr. Sommaruga the deaths were largely to blame on the increasing Palestinian use of firearms which required a tougher Israeli response, Mr. Ben-Ari said.

Israel sealed off the occupied territories on March 30, barring 1.8 million Palestinians from entering Israel and occupied Arab East Jerusalem. Mr. Sommaruga called the closure "collective punishment."

Mr. Rabin pointed to recent decisions easing the restrictions, such as allowing more than 20,000 Palestinians to return to their jobs in Israel and permitting some access to East Jerusalem mosques and churches. "It could be there will be additional steps in the future," Mr. Ben-Ari said.

Before the closure, 120,000 Palestinians worked in Israel, and their wages made up one-third of the income of the occupied territories.

The cabinet decided Sunday to invest 30 million shekels (\$11 million) in the occupied territories over two months to create 20,000 jobs, and decide on further spending in a few weeks. Left-wing ministers had proposed investing 250 million shekels (\$91 million), but the proposal was rejected.

General Danny Rotschild, who coordinates government policy in the occupied territories, told the cabinet that residents of the Gaza Strip had lost all purchasing power, Israel Radio said. The radio quoted him as saying merchants were unable to load goods, but that Gazans were not yet starving.

The government would employ 7,000 Palestinians cleaning streets and buildings in Gaza for a daily wage of 25 shekels (\$9), the radio said.

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday confers with Dutch Foreign Minister Peter Kooijmans (Petra photo)

June 14 floated for 10th round of talks amid Arab consultations

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The 10th round of Arab-Israeli peace talks has been tentatively set to begin June 14, one week later than originally suggested by the U.S., but differences among the Palestinians have to be settled before the finalisation of the date, informed sources said Sunday.

The one-week delay was requested by the Palestinian side, which believes that June 7 would be too close to the 'Eid Al Adha celebrations and an expected meeting of the Arab parties involved in the 19-month negotiations, the sources said.

Also in the office is a meeting of the Palestine Central Council, which is tentatively set for the June 6, for an internal Palestinian review of the peace process, the sources noted.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said Jordan had not been officially informed of the date for the 10th round of talks, but that June 14 "appears to be the informal suggestion."

Dr. Abu Jaber said he was continuing contacts with his counterparts from Syria, Lebanon and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) with a view to fixing a date for the Arab coordination meeting, expected to be held in Amman immediately after the 'Eid Al Adha holidays, which end on Friday, June 5.

"The meeting will review the peace process and evaluate its course," he told the Jordan Times. "Discussions have touched on the core issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict during the ninth round (which ended earlier this month) and an assessment of the negotiations is very important."

Working groups were formed by the various parties to the negotiations during the ninth round, but Palestinian-Israeli agreement over a "declaration of principles" remained elusive.

Palestinian negotiators and senior PLO officials have been sending mixed signals on how they viewed the ninth round. Some said the creation of the working groups was progress while others said such progress was not significant as long as the Israeli side was not willing to commit itself to the basic principles and define the terms of negotiations.

Dr. Abu Jaber said a PLO message brought in by Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo on Saturday "dealt with the (coordination) meeting and other related issues." He did not elaborate.

In the meantime, Palestinian activists are also trying to convene a session of the policy-making Palestine National Council (PNC) before the 10th round of talks.

Those behind the efforts to convene the council "are arguing that it is in the interest of all Palestinians to get the highest elected Palestinian authority have its say on the course of the peace process," said one of the sources.

But PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, who is under pressure from hardline PLO groups to withdraw the Palestinian delegation from the negotiations, is resisting the call for a PNC meeting, the source said.

"Obviously he does not want to come under additional pressure from the PNC," according to the source. PNC Speaker Abdul Hamid Sayeh said Saturday he planned to submit his resignation as and when the council met next.

He cited poor health and disillusionment with the peace process as reasons for his decision. The PNC last met in October 1991, shortly before the Middle East peace process was launched in Madrid, Spain.

"If the activists prevail and pressure Arafat to convene a PNC session, then the June 14 date will have to be put off," said the source, noting that holding a meeting of the 450-member body required preparations.

In Marj Al Zohour, Lebanon Palestinian exiles Sunday hailed as courageous Sheikh Sayeh's decision to resign as PNC speaker.

Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, leader of the 396 men stranded in South Lebanon for more than five months, urged dialogue among the various Palestinian factions to come up with a "unified and mature" stand on the peace talks.

"This step from Sheikh Sayeh is a responsible and courageous move..." Dr. Rantisi told reporters.

Mr. Hekmatyar, his archrival, has pounded Kabul demanding Mr. Masoud step down. Mr. Masoud's fighters control much of Kabul while the southern suburbs are under Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami and its ally, the Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat.

The Jalalabad agreement also calls for Mr. Masoud to step down and hand over the Defence Ministry to a commission. Mr. Mahmood said the process of setting up the commission would begin after President Burhanuddin Rabbani returns from Pakistan, which had supported the 14-year-old guerrilla war against the previous Soviet-backed governments.

In Islamabad, Mr. Rabbani said that the new accord to end faction fighting in Kabul would succeed because the government would take charge of the heavy weapons of all parties.

Mr. Rabbani, on an official visit to Pakistan, attributed the failure of previous peace pacts to end battles for supremacy in Kabul to the lack of a decision on deployment of heavy weapons.

In the Jalalabad agreement we decided upon the collection of heavy weapons from all parties," he said. "This is the main objective to stop war and bloodshed."

Under the Jalalabad agreement, Mr. Rabbani is to supervise the proposed commission to run the Defence Ministry. Mr. Rabbani declined to say who would be held responsible for the thousands of deaths in Kabul since the guerrillas took over.

Kooijmans urges Arabs not to quit peace talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dutch Foreign minister Peter Kooijmans Sunday called on the Arabs not to quit the Middle East peace process, saying next round of talks in June might break the logjam. Speaking to reporters after talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber, Mr. Kooijmans said: "We urge all parties not to miss this peace opportunity and not place obstacles in the path of peace."

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Prince Hassan and Mr. Kooijmans discussed the role Europe could play in the Middle East peace talks, especially in the multilateral talks. They also discussed means of enhancing relations between Jordan and the Netherlands, it said.

In a statement to Petra, Dr. Abu Jaber said he and Mr. Kooijmans discussed the outcome of the ninth round of peace talks, positions of the various parties involved in the process and the latest developments on Arab and international arenas.

Dr. Abu Jaber said that Jordan stressed the need for implementing the United Nations resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and recognising the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

He added that the discussions also covered the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the need to establish peace in the turbulent region in accordance with U.N. resolutions.

Coordinating efforts

Mr. Kooijmans arrived here from Damascus Saturday. In an arrival statement, he said the European Community (EC) was keen on coordinating its efforts with the United States in order to ensure the success of the peace process.

Mr. Kooijmans said that his tour, aimed at gaining first-hand information on the Arab views towards the peace process.

Mr. Kooijmans, who arrived here from Syria after visiting Lebanon, said that the EC countries contribute most effectively towards the multilateral phase of the peace process and maintain close ties with all parties to the negotiations.

Jordanian-Dutch relations, Mr. Kooijmans said, are excellent. He expressed hope for continuous progress.

In his comments at the press conference, the Dutch minister said the ninth round of talks made advances.

"Progress has been made... substantive issues were discussed and not only procedural issues," Mr. Kooijmans said. "The 10th round may lead to some tangible results."

Dr. Abu Jaber, standing with Mr. Kooijmans, said: "For the first we have examined substantive issues. But nothing has been resolved."

Talks in Syria

In Damascus, Mr. Kooijmans discussed with President Hafez Al Assad the peace process and violence in former Yugoslavia. In a departure statement issued in Damascus, he said his talks in Syria, which also included two meetings with Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa, were "very positive and useful."

Syrian presidential spokesman Jubran Kourieh quoted Mr. Assad as telling his guest that each "country in the world has a role and responsibility" towards achieving global peace.

He said Syria was committed to the peace talks "to rid the region of wars." But he criticised Israel for offering "nothing that may advance the peace process," according to Mr. Kourieh. "President Assad affirmed Syria's support for the peace process and its will to avoid the threat of war in the region," Mr. Kourieh said.

"Syria has accepted the basis of the peace process and has done a lot... while Israel has done nothing," Mr. Kourieh quoted Mr. Assad as saying.

"Peace is in the interest of the region and the world, it needs serious and objective cooperation," he said.

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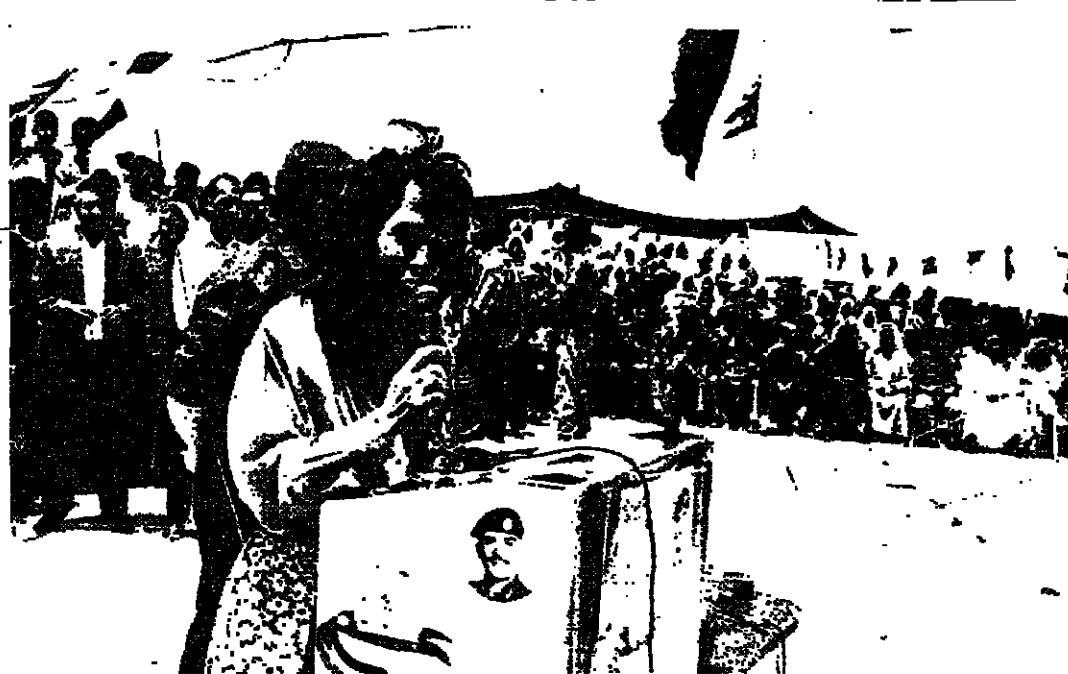
Princess Basma inspects villages in Mafrag

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday pursued her inspection tour of the western and northern parts of Mafrag governorate, where she met with citizens from various villages and discussed their needs for social services.

Princess Basma's tour took her to the Umm Al Na'am Al Sharqieh, Al Sirhan and Al Manshih villages.

The Princess donated the costs of construction of the Social Services Centre in Umm Al Na'am Al Sharqieh villages.

During her visit to Umm Al



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday visits a village in Mafrag governorate (Petra photo)

Sirhan, Princess Basma attended a graduation ceremony and presented certificates to girls and women graduating from voca-

tional training courses organised by the Sama Al Sirhan Community Development Centre. The Princess was accompanied

by the Minister of Social Development, the Mafrag governor and senior government officials from the governorate.

Prince and Princess attended celebration by Arab Youth Forum, Yarmouk U.

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein and Princess Alia Al Faisal Sunday attended a celebration by the Arab Youth Forum (AYF) in cooperation with Yarmouk University, to mark the 40th anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's assumption of his constitutional powers and Jordan's Independence Day.

Addressing the celebration which was held at the Royal Cultural Centre, AYF's Acting Secretary General Hassan Dabian thanked Prince Faisal and Princess Alia for their patronage of the function and pointed out that the AYF seeks to translate its objectives, in marking national and Arab events and occasions. Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Yarmouk University Yacoub Abu Hilou reviewed the achievements of Jordan during the 40 years of King Hussein's rule. He voiced the university's pleasure at taking part in this celebration.



Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein and Princess Alia Al Faisal attend celebration by the Arab Youth Forum in cooperation with Yarmouk University (Petra photo)

The celebration included poetry and folkloric performances, Corale Troupe and the AYF's readings, national songs, dances staged by Yarmouk University branches.

Arab-German, Amman industry chambers pledge to exchange economic information

AMMAN (J.T.) — The head of the Arab-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce Luthar Spaeth Sunday ended a three-day visit to Jordan by signing a memorandum of understanding, paving the way for economic and trade cooperation between his chamber and the Amman Chamber of Industry.

Under the terms of the memorandum, which was signed by Amman Chamber of Industry President Khalidoun Abu Hassan, the two sides pledged to exchange information on economic affairs in Germany and Jordan and cre-

ate opportunities for an exchange of visits by businessmen and industrialists from the two countries.

The two sides also agreed to set up a joint memorandum council, grouping representatives of various trade and economic sectors in Germany and Jordan that will provide the two chambers with information, laws and regulations and other necessary information pertaining to the economy in the two countries, as well as information related to external trade, investment opportunities, existing joint industrial firms and

prospects for launching new ventures that produce commodities for export.

In addition, the joint council will be charged with providing help to visiting businessmen from either country to help them conclude trade transactions.

According to the memorandum the council will hold annual meetings to appraise its own performance and close gaps that could hamper trade exchanges. Chamber of industry sources said that the memorandum will go into force immediately. Before leaving Amman for

home, Mr. Spaeth and his accompanying delegation visited the Sahab Industrial City on the outskirts of Amman and inspected its services and the opportunities for industrial investors.

Fayez Suheimat, director general of the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC), briefed the visitors on the development of the industrial city.

Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour and Mr. Abu Hassan saw off the German delegation upon their departure from Amman.

Damascus talks point to gap in Arab investments

AMMAN (Petra) — A conference by Arab investors and businessmen held in Damascus last week pointed to the huge gap between investments in joint Arab projects in the Arab World on the one hand and the Arab countries' investments in foreign countries on the other; and called on Arab governments to facilitate the flow of capital towards Arab

projects. Falah Qudah, director of the Jordanian Free Zones Corporation (JFZC), who represented Jordan at the conference, said upon his return here Sunday that although investments in joint projects carried out in the Arab World amounted to \$25 billion, Arab investments in foreign countries reached \$670 billion by the end of 1992.

He said Arab governments were called on to improve investment climates in their countries and open the way for investors to bring in capital by providing the appropriate infrastructure and convenient legislations.

A total of 670 participants attended the three-day meeting, including businessmen and investors from Arab and foreign coun-

tries, as well as representatives of insurance companies, banks financial institutions, joint Arab companies and chambers of commerce.

They reviewed working papers and focused attention on areas for investments in Syria and other Arab countries and explored the prospects of developing a pan-Arab strategy.

Crown Prince inaugurates R&D programme at Safawi

SAFAWI (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday inaugurated the Badia Research and Development Programme at Safawi in the northern Jordanian badia, some 156 kilometres northeast of Amman.

At a meeting with the project staff, Prince Hassan said the programme has a unique status worldwide because it is being implemented in an area characterised by abundance of ground and surface water and by special geological and economic features.

The Crown Prince voiced hope that the project, which receives the support of His Majesty King Hussein, will serve as a nucleus for a centre on higher studies on the badia, to be run by motivated people from the area.

Prince Hassan stressed the need for utilising the existing knowledge and expertise in the badia to set up such projects designed to develop these regions which have so far remained under exploited.

He called on badia residents to exploit the resources in their regions in a balanced and integrated manner, noting in this regard that the badia constitutes 80 per cent of the total area of Jordan.

Prince Hassan said that the badia development programme would not have seen light had it not been for the cooperation between Jordanian and foreign universities, as well as the Geographic Studies Centre and the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST).

The Crown Prince expressed hope that the programme will be one of the great landmarks of development in the badia region and the entire world.

He stressed the importance of cooperation between the universities involved in the programme and the concerned ministries,



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday visits Safawi, where he inaugurated the Badia Research and Development Programme (Petra photo)

such as the ministries of Water and Irrigation, Agriculture and Energy, in extending the programme's lesson to other regions.

"Such coordination will make it possible to carry out similar projects in other regions in the central and south badia," Prince Hassan said. He added "it is high time to think of the badia region as an integrated environment in terms of services and agricultural development."

Commenting on the programme, Prince Hassan said it is scientific, but modest start, given that it is financed through donations and gifts and not through government funds.

He called for utilising the special studies available on the development of the badia and stressed the need for keeping such studies at an effective information centre so that it can be of

benefit to researchers from the badia itself.

Prince Hassan highlighted the role of development studies and called for the exploitation of basic natural and human resources to develop the badia region.

He also called for benefiting from international experiences in this field and underlined the importance of utilising the unexploited areas in the badia.

Upon his arrival at the project site, the Crown Prince toured the various sections and was briefed on its objectives, aspirations and future needs by Programme Director Abdul Rahman Fataf-tah.

The programme was initiated by the Higher Council for Science and Technology, the Royal British Geographic Society, in cooperation with Jordanian universities and several foreign universities.

The three-year programme covers an area of 11,210 square kilometres, or 12.5 per cent of the total area of Jordan.

It aims to ensure a sustainable and comprehensive development of the Jordanian badia, by turning it into a basic production and investment attraction centre, thus contributing to supporting the national economy and improving the people's living conditions.

The programme encourages group work and the optimal utilisation of natural resources.

Prince Hassan was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, the ministers of Agriculture, Labour, Planning, Water and Irrigation and Social Development and senior government officials, in addition to the British ambassador to Jordan.

Bridges to close May 25 and 26

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Security Department (PSD) Sunday announced new arrangements for travel across the King Hussein and Prince Mohammad bridges to and from the Israeli occupied Arab lands on Tuesday and Wednesday May 25 and 26.

The statement said the two bridges will be closed after 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday and all day Wednesday, they will reopen to normal traffic on May 27.

The PSD, which gave no reason for the closures, requested travellers to refrain from heading for the bridges on May 26 and to allow for urgent cases to pass on May 25.

Only the King Hussein Bridge is assigned for travellers to and from the occupied territories, and the Prince Mohammad Bridge is assigned to trucks crossings in both directions.

In the meantime, PSD centres in Amman and other towns opened Saturday for the registration of travellers to the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

5 new care, training institutions for handicapped children to go up

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education, Sunday announced that it was increasing the number of institutions which offer special education to handicapped children and expanding the scope of its financial aid and kind assistance to needy families.

Minister of Social Development Amin Awad Mashaqbeh said in a statement that five new institutions are being set up in Maan, Tafleh, Mafrag, Ajloun and Aqaba regions to offer care and training to mentally retarded and deaf children.

These centres are expected to open next month, except the centres for the deaf which will open at the start of the next scholastic year in August, because their

curricula are supervised and run by the Ministry of Education, said the minister.

In addition to these projects, work is under-way to expand the present social development centres and institutions to cope with the growing demand for their services, added Dr. Mashaqbeh.

The centre for handicapped children in Jerash will be enlarged from 75 to 150 beds by August this year, at a cost of JD 360,000, he said.

Another centre at Adnanieh, near Karak, is being expanded at a cost of JD 25,000, and the Manara centre expansion will cost 16,000, added Dr. Mashaqbeh.

Furthermore, the ministry will open new classes for handicapped children at centres run by voluntary organisations and ministry of education schools, such as the one in Koura in the Irbid district and another at Ruseifa, said the minister.

He announced also that the ministry will conduct a survey to locate handicapped children to provide them with assistance and care. The survey will be conducted at Wadi Araba, south of the Dead Sea, with the help of a specialised team, according to Dr. Mashaqbeh.

He said the same team will also collect information on families and determine those most in need of urgent help.

Referring to the ministry's financial assistance to needy families in Jordan, Dr. Mashaqbeh pointed out that such families at present receive assistance ranging from JD 25 to JD 50 monthly, depending on the their need, noting that the ministry's list of needy people now includes 25,286 names.

The ministry thus spends nearly J.D. 10.5 million in financial assistance to needy families throughout the country, the minister added.

Stressing that no hunger in the actual sense of the word exists in Jordan, Dr. Mashaqbeh discussed that the ministry of social development, acting through the National Aid Fund NAF will continue to search for the needy and to provide financial and in-kind assistance to them.

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The British Bank of the Middle East holds a trade services seminar



AMMAN — On 23 May 23, the British Bank of the Middle East held a trade services seminar at the Forte Grand Hotel in Amman.

The seminar was attended by over 30 of the banks top customers and guests. The seminar covered all trade services that are of interest to importers and exporters such as documentary credits, collections, treasury and forward dealings, trade finance, marine insurance and shipping.

Speaking at the seminar were, Mr. Imad Marar, Manager Trade Services, Mr. Nabil Bitar, Trade Finance Executive, and Mr. Waleed Jadoun, Manager Treasury, from the British Bank of the Middle East.

Also Mr. Amin Kavar from Amin Kavar and Sons Co. spoke about shipping, Mr. Nabil Akkawi from Middle East

Insurance Co. talked about marine insurance and Mr. Sahem Yaghi from USAID spoke about their Commodity Import Programme. During these sessions there was substantial discussions about all the issues that are of interest to Jordanian importers and exporters.

Mr. Derek Kelly, the Area Manager of the British Bank of the Middle East, said "this seminar demonstrates the bank's commitment to provide an excellent and increasingly comprehensive service to its customers, and to promote Jordanian exports. "The bank will hold more of these seminars in the future to introduce the British Bank of the Middle East and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation's international capabilities to the Jordanian market.

Scandal

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Scandal

Conference to analyse economic performance

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The University of Jordan's Centre For Strategic Studies (CSS) is organising a three-day conference on "The Jordanian Economy — Problems and Prospects," next month, according to an announcement by the centre Sunday.

Over 30 working papers will be reviewed by participants —

mainly economists — from Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, the United States, countries in North Africa, Japan and Mexico, CSS Director Mustafa Hamarneh told the Jordan Times.

Participants in the June 13-15 conference include academicians, activists, businessmen, representatives from the private and public sectors, community leaders and other individuals, said Dr.

Hamarneh.

"The conference is the first real attempt at looking critically inward and analysing the past performance of the Jordanian economy and searching for new advantages and determining where to go from here," said Dr. Hamarneh, an economic historian.

He said the papers will cover a wide range of topics including economic development in

Jordan between the 1950s and the 1990s, Jordan's foreign debts, the economic restructuring programme, unemployment in Jordan, investments and legislations to encourage investments, Jordan and the Gulf states, and European-Jordanian economic relationships.

According to Dr. Hamarneh, the conference is open to the public.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Crown Prince attends Air Force graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday visited one of the Royal Jordanian Air Force bases where he attended the graduation of a new batch of students and presented certificates to them. Prince Hassan praised the high standard of performance of the graduates during the training course and the efforts of the trainers who supervised the course. The Crown Prince was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein.

Holiday to run from May 30 through June 4

AMMAN (Petra) — A public holiday will be observed in Jordan starting Sunday May 30 until Friday evening June 4 in celebration of the Eid Al Adha (feast of sacrifice) which is expected to fall Monday, May 31, 1993. An official communique from the Prime Minister's office issued Sunday said that all government departments and public institutions will be closed during the holiday.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Fragments: Weavings and Works on Paper" by Kevin A. Hinch and Margaret M. Hinch at the American Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Patrice Pain at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Armenian miniature exhibition adapted by Clara Metzhegopian at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of sculptures by Artist Abdul Hayy Musallam at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Rafiq Al Lahham at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ French film entitled "Lola Montes" at the French Cultural Centre at 8 p.m.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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Pushed into a corner

FROM DISGRUNTLED young Palestinian refugees calling for shedding the blood of Palestinian negotiators as traitors, to the more subtle expressions of frustration with the peace process by a growing number of moderate Palestinians, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is being steadily pushed into a corner for not quitting the Arab-Israeli talks.

The last blow to the PLO and its Chairman Yasser Arafat came from where it was least expected: The Speaker of the Palestine National Council Abdul Hamid Sayeh who Saturday announced plans to resign in protest over the peace process.

"I do not want to be accused of damaging the Palestinian cause... Tragedies are befalling the Palestinian people and I do not want to be blamed in history," Sheikh Sayeh said after announcing his plans to end his political career. Calls to abandon the negotiations also came from Palestinian negotiators, stemmed by popular pressure as much as loss of faith in the viability of the negotiations.

When the peace process first started in Madrid nineteen months ago, Palestinian youngsters threw olive branches instead of stones at Israeli tanks and soldiers patrolling, and controlling, their streets. The negotiations were hoped to be the vehicle that would carry both Arabs and Israelis to the safety and plenitude of peace.

Nine fruitless rounds of talks later, more and more Palestinians view the process as a mechanism for legalising the occupation of their land, the theft of their resources and the continuous violation of their rights.

This sea-change in the Palestinian perception of the peace process is sure to force what Palestinian, and Israeli, hardliners have long sought: a decision to quit the talks.

In the face of growing opposition to the negotiations, even within the organisation's rank and file, the PLO will soon find itself having to choose between two equally painful and nightmarish scenarios: dropping the peace talks in response to the demands of its constituency or losing ground to the benefit of fundamentalists.

The PLO and the Palestinians will not be the only losers in the event of either scenarios coming true; the whole region will be dragged back into the annals of despair and chaos, with reverberations felt far beyond the Middle East unless breakthroughs are achieved in the negotiations.

And for that to happen, Israel, and indeed the United States, have to start acting more responsibly.

The Palestinians have made all the concessions they can offer to get-and-keep the peace talks alive. Israel, on the other hand, has offered little more than empty rhetoric, focusing on its partly genuine but mainly fabricated security concerns.

This must change. And not only for the sake of the Palestinians, but also for the sake of Israel and the region as a whole.

Israel must approach the peace process with the sincerity and seriousness it deserves. It must get out of its security bubble and give the Palestinians a reason to believe that peace is on Israeli minds as much as it is on theirs. The siege of the occupied territories must be lifted and the human rights situation there must improve. Serious negotiations leading to ensuring the Palestinians' right to self-determination and statehood must come to a soon and fast start.

In all this, the United States must be helping, applying pressure where it is due and offering alternatives to deadlocked situations.

The peace talks started with the declared objective of achieving a just and comprehensive Middle East peace on the basis of a land-for-peace formula and Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. That no progress has been made towards attaining that goal gives ample justification for the growing discontent with it. And that the horrors of failure require that all play their role. The Palestinians have long been ready and on the field; the Israelis have yet to engage.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDANIAN DAILIES Sunday commented on His Majesty King Hussein's address to the media and his warning against those elements trying to sell out principles and pursue material gains. Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that out his keenness on helping Jordan to pursue the march of democracy, the King called on the Jordanian journalists to be objective and tackle issues with a spirit of responsibility. The King's address to the local press was a reminder that journalists ought now to abide by the ethics of the profession of journalism and rise to the level of responsibility, said the paper. It said that the law on press and publications, which was provided for in the National Charter, should be respected if the national interests are to be safeguarded. By warning against irresponsible elements, the King has emphasised the fact that the process of democracy and pluralism does not tolerate any such evil elements that tend to harm the country's interests, the paper pointed out. There can be no room for those trying to outbid others through offence and there can be no room for writers not complying with the country's laws and constitution, said the paper. It said that only through responsible and positive action can the national interests be protected.

ARAFAT HIJAZI, a columnist in Sawt Al Ahsan daily, criticised Hanan Ashrawi, the spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks for not being objective in her recent statements. The writer said that while Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, the head of the delegation, was calling for a boycott of the talks because of their futility, Dr. Ashrawi was criticising the Palestinian groups who oppose the negotiations, accusing them of being behind their failure. The writer said that Dr. Abdul Shafi, who lives in Gaza where the Israelis are exercising all forms of repression, is in a position to realise the true nature of Israel and its policies against the Palestinians and whether the Israelis are to be trusted at the talks. Noting that the Israelis escalated their repression during the ninth session, the writer said that the Palestinian opposition groups could not be held responsible for the Israeli killing of young people and demolishing Arab homes.

Why Palestinians question the peace process

By Khalil Barhoum

Throughout the better part of 1992, the Arab-Israeli peace talks proceeded at an excruciatingly slow pace, characterised more by stumbling than walking. With the ascent of Labour's Yitzhak Rabin to power, many observers predicted a rejuvenation of the then-suspended negotiations, if only because of Mr. Rabin's own campaign pledges. But since taking office, Mr. Rabin has managed to freeze the talks at their prevaricating Likud status of almost a year ago. Not only that, but since his expulsion of 415 Palestinians to south Lebanon last December, and subsequent defiance of Security Council Resolution 799, calling on his government to repatriate them, the peace process was in a state of limbo until heavy American pressure succeeded in restarting it on April 27.

After a year of futile negotiations it seems that the only genuine accomplishment of the Madrid process so far is that it has taken place at all. Despite the expiry of the deadline the U.S. set for the talks on Oct. 31, 1992, there is still no sense of urgency in Washington. If anything, it is the Palestinians, not the Israelis, who have been roundly scolded, on more than one occasion, for their alleged recalcitrance in the course of the negotiations. According to the New York Times' Thomas Friedman, one of the Bush administration's last acts in office was to call in the Palestinian delegates and "read them the riot act". On Sept. 17, Friedman quoted Mr. Bush's assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs, Edward Djerejian, as telling the Palestinian negotiating team in Washington that the question of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza was not on the table according to the terms of reference for the talks. The only thing on the table, Mr. Djerejian (who has incidentally been retained by the Clinton administration) reportedly stated, was interim self-rule for the Palestinians, and hence they should "knock off" the talk about "final status".

The effect of the expulsions

Undoubtedly, the political situation has evolved since Friedman first reported this encounter. A new U.S. administration has been installed in Washington; Israel's government, in a self-defeating manoeuvre, expelled over 400 Palestinians to Lebanon shortly before the Bush administration left office; and Warren Christopher, the new secretary of state, struck a separate deal with Israel on Feb. 1, primarily designed to protect the Israeli government from any further confrontation with the Security Council over the issue of the expulsion. Of all these intervening events, however, Israel's decision to expel so many Palestinians all at once, coupled with its refusal to implement Resolution 799, have ultimately thrust the occupied territories into a whirlwind of violence. Furthermore, the Palestinian leaders' decision to return to the negotiations despite repeated assurances to the contrary unless the deportees were all repatriated has caused further strains among the increasingly restive Palestinian population under Israeli occupation.

Having initially managed to draw unneeded international attention to his government with

the expulsion decision, Mr. Rabin has contributed to the strengthening of Hamas, the very party he claims to be concerned about. Not only that, but almost as a corollary, the Palestinian leadership's decision to overlook the fate of the deportees and return to the talks implies serious weakening of the secular factions who have been willing to negotiate under the U.S. umbrella. Long before the expulsions took place, the Palestinians in the occupied territories had become disenchanted with lack of progress in the talks and begun to question the wisdom of continuing on a road which seemed likely to lead nowhere. Now that the leadership has decided to go back to the talks without Israel implementing Resolution 799, the Palestinians in the territories are wondering aloud whether their leaders still feel accountable to them.

The expulsions have certainly served as a catalyst for a process of self-examination and reappraisal of the situation by Palestinians everywhere. Many had warned that, by first consenting to Israeli terms for Palestinian involvement in the Madrid conference, the Palestinian side was conceding too much ground before negotiations ever began. These warnings about Palestinian political vulnerability are ringing truer now than ever after the Palestinian leaders decided to abandon, yet again, their previous pledges not to go back to Washington until the expulsion issue was resolved. So in spite of, or perhaps because of, the untenable situation in which the Palestinian negotiating team now finds itself, one is hard-pressed to see any concrete progress since Madrid.

Frustration and resentment

As a result, the Palestinian

people are not only angered by Israel's evasive ways and lack of goodwill, but are also directing frustration at their leadership and the Palestinian negotiators, and subjecting both to an acid test in which not only past performance but also future objectives are becoming the subject of intense questioning and appraisal.

In the face of Israel's interminable human, civil and political rights violations in the West Bank and Gaza, it did not take the

people to continue involvement in the peace process. Meanwhile, the Palestinians began looking for successes in the "path to peace", only to be distracted by somewhat ephemeral triumphs, principally on the public relations front, achieved by members of the negotiating team. Not to detract in any way from such individual triumphs, what led to the mounting Palestinian exasperation with the status quo was the growing realisation that the nego-

"Israel's humiliating terms, which are customarily reserved for defeated nations in the aftermath of a war, are viewed by the Palestinians as nothing short of sheer capitulation to continued colonisation of the Palestinian people under the aegis of a revived Pax Americana in the region. But more to the point, the conditions placed on the Palestinians (and the Palestinian leadership's compliance with these conditions) are regarded by many as squandering the moral victories achieved by the intifada."

Palestinians under occupation long to become deeply resentful of the blatant asymmetry between Israel's expressed willingness to reach accommodation with the Palestinians through the peace process on the one hand, and the seemingly never-ending trail of pain and suffering, which Israel in the meantime was visiting on them on a daily basis, on the other. All the while, Israel's defiant and incessant violations were being committed as it shielded itself from criticism because of its declared willingness

tiating team as a whole was not winning.

The Palestinians concluded, in essence, that they were being sidetracked by sporadic individual successes and did not realise that what really mattered was the overall outcome. And, unfortunately, the outcome has not been good, nor because of failings by the team members, but because the rules of the game have been so devised as to frustrate their potential right from the start, and because the referee, namely the U.S., happens to en-

joy a rather incestuous relationship with the other team. Moreover, the Palestinians realised to their dismay that once you start playing the political game you are sternly reminded that the ground rules have to be adhered to throughout the game. That, of course, is where all the stipulations against Palestinian participation in the talks have come back to haunt the Palestinian negotiators, since any attempt at changing the rules has been frowned upon by the Israelis and the U.S. and has been depicted as the inexcusably destructive to the spirit, if not the letter, of the talks. In this case, only outside interference (perhaps through the U.N., the European Community, or both) could help to change the rules.

The politics of defeat

Under such conditions, how does one expect the Palestinians to accomplish anything in the ninth round? They cannot conceivably be expected to triumph under the circumstances. Additionally, they are resourceful enough to realise that Israel simply has no military or political incentive to reach an equitable accommodation with them over the fate of the occupied territories. After all, the Palestinians have not won a war against Israel, nor have they at any time constituted a viable military threat to its security. These political realities (along with the collapse of the former Soviet Union and Iraq's ignominious defeat in the Gulf war) might help in part explain why the Palestinian leadership initially acceded to the humiliating conditions for Palestinian participation in the Madrid conference. With the Palestinian leaders' recent agreement to join the talks despite widespread Palestinian opposition to the decision, one has to conclude that the

politics of defeat is still the prevailing paradigm among Palestinian decision-makers.

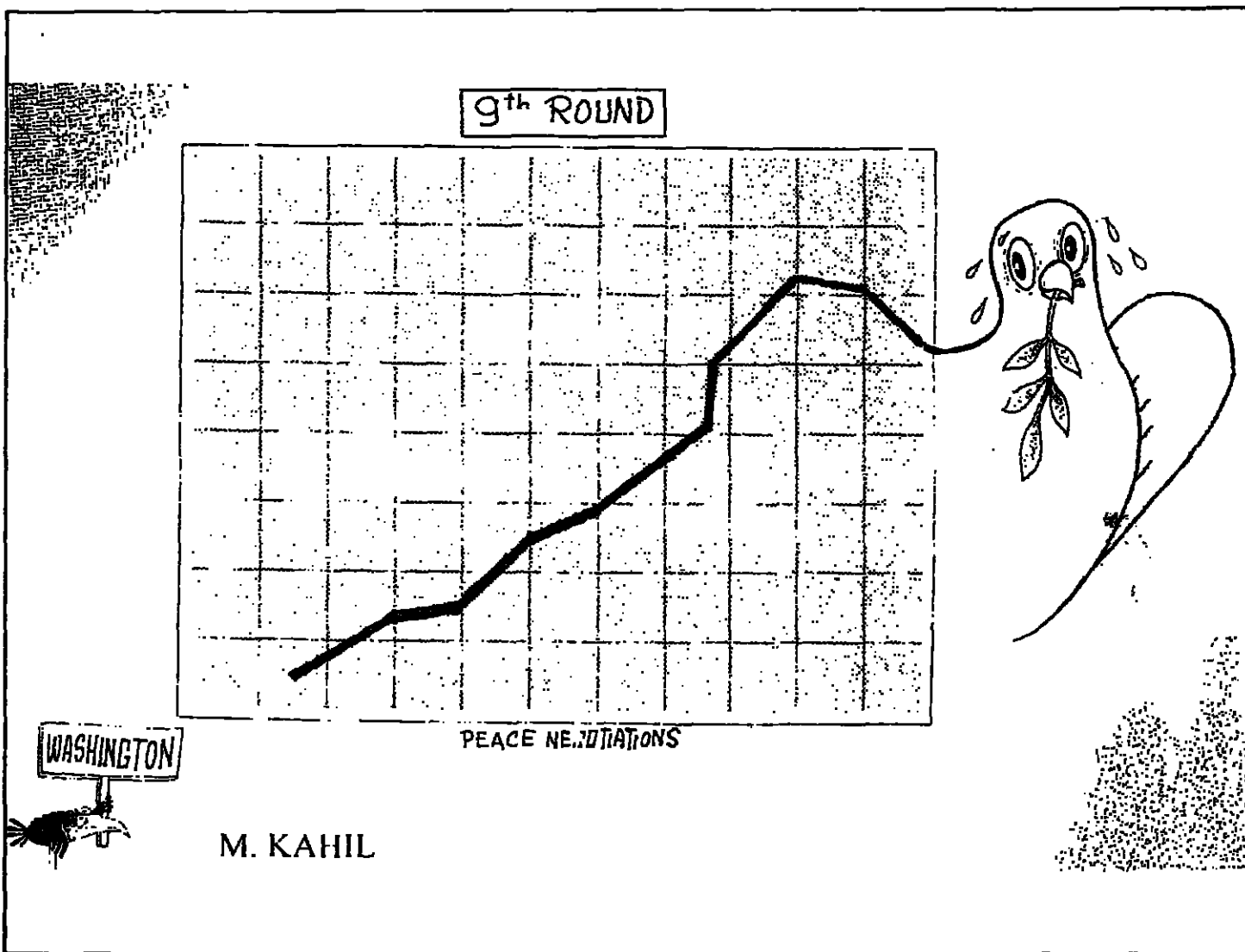
Furthermore, the intifada has lost its sense of direction and, ultimately, any meaningful impact on the crucial decisions leading to Madrid. With the popular uprising desperately groping to restore its original purpose, the prevalent — albeit reluctant — feeling among most Palestinians was that the intifada phase of the Palestinian struggle was about to give way to the struggle on the political and diplomatic front. For all intents and purposes, the home-grown uprising looked like being neutralised, if not hijacked, by the diplomats who owed their allegiance to the politicians. But when the "diplomats", under extremely difficult conditions, failed to alleviate the ills of the occupation, the level of anger and frustration in the Palestinian street rose almost daily. So, quite clearly, when the expulsions occurred, they merely helped unravel what had been under the surface all along. The Palestinian decision to return to Washington is likely to cause greater damage to Palestinian unity, in the long run, than did the initial decision to go to Madrid.

Squandering the intifada's success

Beyond the violent manifestation of outrage and discontent directed at their Israeli oppressors, the Palestinians under occupation are also signalling to their own leaders their impatience with a peace process that has so far managed, among other things, to legitimise the U.S.-brokered exclusionary rules of conduct for the negotiations. Israel's humiliating terms, which are customarily reserved for defeated nations in the aftermath of a war, are viewed by the Palestinians as nothing short of sheer capitulation to continued colonisation of the Palestinian people under the aegis of a revived Pax Americana in the region. But more to the point, the conditions placed on the Palestinians (and the Palestinian leadership's compliance with these conditions) are regarded by many as squandering the moral victories achieved by the intifada.

And, unless the Palestinian leadership inside and outside the occupied territories delves back into the roots of what it really was that made the U.S. and Israel become suddenly interested in opening a dialogue with the Palestinians in the first place (i.e. the intifada), the Palestinian leaders, most likely, will run the risk of becoming like flowers in a vase — looking pretty but cut off from their roots. At the same time, if those leaders truly hope to remedy the intolerable situation stemming from such unacceptable conditions, this indeed might be the time: otherwise, the coalescence of American and Israeli goals in the "peace negotiations" — symbolised by the constant attempts to simultaneously undercut the Palestinian leadership and legitimise Israel's colonial grip over Palestinian land — will soon acquire a life of its own and, tragically, might become irreversible.

Dr. Khalil Barhoum is senior lecturer in the Department of Linguistics, Stanford University, California. The article is reprinted from Middle East International.



ADL CASE

Espionage character returns unexpectedly

By Jane Hunter

SACRAMENTO, Ca. — Tom Gerard, the former San Francisco police officer who figures in the unfolding espionage scandal involving the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), was arrested on April 6 at San Francisco airport as he stepped off a flight from the Philippines. "Mr. Gerard's return was unexpected and representatives of the hundreds of organisations and thousands of individuals targeted in the espionage operation are concerned that the investigation will be disrupted as authorities scramble to file charges against him."

Mr. Gerard fled to the Philippines and abruptly retired from the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) late last year after the FBI questioned him and Roy Bullock, an undercover ADL agent, about selling intelligence on local activists to South African government agents. Since then the San Francisco district attorney has released court documents alleging that Mr. Gerard was one of dozens of law enforcement officials around the U.S. who supplied Mr. Bullock and other ADL "fact-finders" with confidential information on leftist, Arab-American, anti-apartheid

and white supremacist organisations and individuals. The ADL has insisted that, while it paid Mr. Bullock every week for 33 years to spy on right-wing hate groups, it did not know about his other spying activities. But raids last month on the prominent Jewish organisation's San Francisco and Los Angeles offices are believed to have turned up evidence undermining that claim.

Because both Mr. Bullock and Mr. Gerard worked closely with the local FBI office, a congressional investigation is under way into whether the bureau was using the ADL to collect intelligence on non-violent political groups which it could not legally collect itself. The district attorney's investigation has been focused on whether Mr. Bullock and the ADL violated state laws protecting the privacy of records and whether the ADL properly reported its weekly payments to Mr. Bullock. The San Francisco Police Commission was conducting a parallel investigation into Mr. Gerard's passing to Mr. Bullock police intelligence files that had been ordered destroyed and information from law enforcement data bases.

Added to fears that these investigations may be thrown into disarray while authorities prepare the speedy trial to which Mr. Gerard is legally entitled, there is concern that the CIA may circumscribe the proceedings against him. Mr. Gerard left the SFPD to work with the CIA in El Salvador between 1982 and 1985 and, according to court documents, Roy Bullock has indicated that Mr. Gerard was reporting to the CIA on the work the two did for South Africa. In an April 27 interview with the Los Angeles Times, Mr. Gerard threatened to forestall moves to prosecute him by "gray mailing" the government with evidence that the CIA trained and financed Central American death squads during the 1980s.

Mr. Gerard gave Capt. John Willett, his former commanding officer in the SFPD, seemingly contradictory reasons for his sudden decision to return to California. Mr. Willett told local reporters that Mr. Gerard said he feared the CIA was planning to kill him, that he was missing his family, and that he wanted his day in court — Middle East International.

Pakistan reeling from U.S. attacks

By Kathy Gannon
The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan is reeling from verbal attacks by the United States, an old ally that now accuses it of supporting terrorists, building nuclear bombs and dragging its feet on curbing the drug trade.

Pakistan, Washington's closest regional ally before the collapse of the Soviet Union, has until June 7 to convince the United States not to blacklist it as a terrorist state, said Shahyar Khan, the foreign secretary.

Many people in this mostly moderate Muslim nation wonder where the relationship went wrong.

As long as invading Soviet soldiers were in neighbouring Afghanistan, Washington and Islamabad were united in a desire to force the Russians out.

To do that, Washington spent billions of dollars arming Afghan insurgents, who used Pakistan as a springboard to conduct attacks in Afghanistan.

The rebels overran Kabul last year and tossed the communists from power. But they have been pounding each other with their huge stockpile of weapons ever since.

Thousands of Arabs came to Pakistan to join the U.S.-backed Afghan resistance, and many stayed on to fight for a more fundamentalist state. Several figures in the World Trade Centre

bombing in New York in February — which killed six people and injured 1,000 — turned out to be Arab militants who had trained in Afghanistan.

Until 1989, when Moscow withdrew its estimated 115,000 troops in line with a U.N.-brokered accord, Pakistan could do no wrong in Washington's eyes, Mr. Khan said. Now it can't do anything right.

U.S. officials say relations went down hill in 1990, when they say Pakistan decided to build a nuclear device.

But Pakistan maintains nothing changed in 1990.

"We have not assembled a nuclear device," Mr. Khan said, although Pakistan's deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan has the capability.

A U.S. law bars any U.S. aid or military equipment transfers to Pakistan unless the president first certifies that the nation does not have a nuclear weapon.

Pakistanis angrily point to their enemy neighbour, India, which is widely known to have a nuclear bomb. India isn't on Washington's hit list, and Islamabad says that's a double standard.

"We in Pakistan feel that we were friendly with the Americans for a long time...doing their dirty jobs as far as Afghanistan was concerned and now they are pulling our tail and doing nothing to India," said Prime Minister Balakh Sher Mazari.

In September 1990, former

President Bush said Islamabad had the means to build a bomb, and U.S. humanitarian and military aid was suspended.

Some U.S. lawmakers want Pakistan declared a terrorist state in part because hundreds of foreign fundamentalist Muslim militants, many of them outlaws in their own countries, have taken refuge here.

Others want to impose sanctions on Pakistan because it's dragging its heels on curbing drug production and trafficking.

U.S. officials in Islamabad warn that declaring Pakistan a terrorist state could fuel an Islamic revolution. It could also eliminate whatever influence Washington retains in Islamabad.

"It will be the militant Muslims who take over this country. They will radicalise...129 million people by a foolish act like this," Narcotics Minister Sardar Asaf Ali said, referring to proposed sanctions.

Declaring Pakistan a terrorist state hinges on proving whether Pakistan supports Muslim militants in India's troubled state of Kashmir and Sikh separatists in India's state of Punjab.

India also is trying to link Pakistan to the deadly bombings in Bombay earlier this year that killed at least 300 people.

Pakistan denies such Indian allegations, but U.S. officials say satellite photos show weapons traffic across the two nations' border.

Privatisation in a vacuum is no solution — U.N.

NEW DELHI (R) — Privatising state-run, agriculture-based economies will not improve people's lives unless it goes hand in hand with land reforms and technical training, a United Nations expert said Sunday.

"Privatisation is not an end in itself," said Mahbub Ul Haq, the author of the U.N. Development Programme's Human Development report for 1993. "It is a means to an end. Governments tend to get mesmerised by the means, by growth, by revenues."

More than 80 of the world's nations embarked on privatisation programmes in the 1980s and the early 1990s. Mr. Haq told Reuters. "It has to be seen as part of a milieu for private enterprise, as a means to higher levels of human development."

The report, which is to be officially released Tuesday, studies liberalisation programmes in 11 countries. Mr. Haq said of the countries studied, China and Argentina gave the most consideration about the impact of their

plans on people. "China has put in a massive amount into training its people," he said, adding that industrial reforms were preceded by five years of agricultural reforms, which had led to a dramatic fall in rural poverty.

Mr. Haq, a former finance minister of Pakistan, said it was usually taken for granted that privatisation would lead to unemployment, as state-run enterprises shed surplus labour.

That did not have to be the case, he said. "Before the lay-

offs, there should be training. Prior attempts should be made to develop alternative employment in the private sector. Education is the quiet prescription for revolution."

Another key was to decentralise decision-making. In the poor nations of South Asia, including India and Pakistan, less than a tenth of government spending went through local bodies.

The comparable figure for South Korea was 33 per cent. "A highly centralised power structure builds up people's re-

sentment, and leads to tensions between the people and the government," he said.

Mr. Haq said he was against the growth model usually suggested by agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The IMF, he said, usually advocated a cut in farm subsidies to reduce fiscal deficits, which affected the rural poor.

"Why not squeeze military spending?" Mr. Haq asked. "It is an indirect subsidy to the rich. In poor countries, surely, policy

makers should look at it." The UNDP report names seven sins of privatisation: Maximising revenue at all costs, substituting private monopolies for public ones, corruption, higher debt, higher public borrowing, lack of training and lack of political consensus.

"The enumeration of these sins is a caution not against privatisation, but against privatising within the wrong framework and without a human development purpose in mind," Mr. Haq said.

Resents U.S. pressure

Asia tightens upon patents

BOMBAY (R) — Arm-twisting by the United States is forcing Asian countries to adopt tougher laws to protect patents and copyright, but many bridle at being dictated to by Washington and argue that standards should be negotiated multilaterally.

Although Asian countries are tightening legislation against copyright piracy, fake watches, pirated computer software and videos, and copycat fashions still festoon the region's crowded markets.

U.S. businesses estimate they lose \$2 billion a year in trade because of piracy and copyright violations across Asia, with many governments often half-hearted about enforcing the rules — even if they are on the statute books.

In the latest move against rampant violations in Asia, the United States at the end of April threatened punitive action against India and Thailand, and has put most other countries in the region in the dock under its unilateral trade law.

The pressure from the United States and other industrialised nations has encouraged countries such as Thailand, Indonesia and Taiwan to tighten patents, trademark and copyright legislation over the past five years, while China has signed a memorandum of understanding with Washington.

But many governments still appear to turn a blind eye to even blatant violations. Singapore passed a law in 1987

to end unauthorised copying of computer software as well as audio and video cassettes, books and perfumes. Anyone caught selling a fake is liable to a fine of up to \$50,000 and a five-year jail term.

But industry officials say there has not been a single case of criminal prosecution for local intellectual property rights infringement.

The Business Software Alliance (BSA), a private group formed by leading U.S. software companies to combat the problem, says it suspects free-trading Singapore has become a distribution centre for pirated software manuals and programmes.

In a raid prompted by BSA of two Singapore retail outlets in April, hundreds of manuals and diskettes containing pirated software programmes were seized, including Microsoft MS-DOS version 6.0 manuals only two weeks after release of the new software in the United States.

"BSA is concerned that Singapore is becoming a notorious port for software piracy," said Aliz Parlour, Microsoft's corporate attorney and BSA vice-president.

Some argue that unilateral action by the United States is inappropriate.

India — listed for the third year running under Washington's priority list for retaliatory action against patents violations — said it would not like to negotiate with

the United States specifically on patents, but on the entire range of issues covered under the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks.

Thailand said the United States was demanding too much if it wanted Thai copyright laws to be toughened to meet strict U.S. standards.

Bangkok would not take such action until rules on the protection of intellectual property rights were concluded under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Deputy Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanavisit said.

"What I have learnt from reports of U.S. demands over Thailand's patent laws is that the U.S. is demanding too much and its demands seem to flow on indefinitely," Mr. Jurin said.

Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai said Thailand would adhere to international principles but would not bow to unacceptable U.S. demands.

Under U.S. law, Washington must decide by the end of May whether to open an investigation into states on the priority list, after which a cited country has up to nine months to toughen its laws or face sanctions.

Strike in eastern Germany set to end after steel pay deal

FRANKFURT (R) — Employer and union leaders Sunday hammered out a pay deal intended to bring a halt to three weeks of bitter strike in east Germany's steel industry.

The first legal strike in the region for 60 years is expected to end officially Tuesday, when the membership of the powerful I.G. Metall Union vote on the deal.

The economists said the scars of the strike — mainly in the form of shattered investor confidence — would remain long after steel production resumed. They described the deal as disappointing, expensive for the crisis-ridden steel sector.

The agreement, reached early Sunday after 13 hours of talks, provides for east German pay to rise to 80 per cent of western levels in June. To 90 per cent in October 1994 and to match western pay by April 1996.

"This is a presentable agreement," Horst Wagner, chief negotiator for the union, said. "We would not have achieved this result without a strike."

Around 9,000 steel workers were the last remaining strikers from a much wider wave of industrial action in the east. They were joined in the first two weeks

of strike action by tens of thousands of engineering workers, also fighting for the reinstatement of a cancelled contract.

Striking engineering workers in all but one of the five east German regions have since agreed a pay deal and the sector returned to normal operations last week. In Berlin-Brandenburg, engineering employers still have to iron out small differences with the union on how the final contract should look.

With the steel pact, the union achieved a key objective in pushing through faster pay increases than were awarded to striking colleagues in the east German engineering industry. Wages there will only reach western levels in July 1996.

I.G. Metall, which represents both sectors, said lower basic pay in the steel sector meant faster rises were needed there.

But economists who had viewed the engineering sector pact as a considerable burden for industry said the swifter wage rises in this deal were likely to put even more jobs at risk.

One immeasurable, but serious, consequence of the strike was likely to be in discouraging

investment. "I think this will prove a problem," said Union Bank of Switzerland economist Richard Reid.

"The whole situation in Germany — with talks of new taxes and (German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's) vague plans to cut spending — is discouraging to investors and tends to divert funds from the former GDR (East Germany)," he added.

A slowdown in investment would be another blow for the Treuhand Privatisation Agency, which Saturday said its work to save Germany's core industry would leave the Bonn government footing a much higher deficit than first thought.

Treuhand Chairwoman Birgit Breuel estimated the Treuhand, a government agency formed at German unification in October 1990 to sell or shut down 30,000 east German companies, would end about 270 billion marks (\$169 billion) in the red.

The economics ministry estimated last month the final Treuhand debt would be 230 billion marks (\$144 billion), up from 205 billion marks (\$128 billion) originally forecast.

World Bank approves \$100m loan to Uganda

KAMPALA (R) — The World Bank has approved a soft loan to Uganda of \$100 million to help rehabilitate the East African country's financial sector.

The funds will be released under the bank's financial sector adjustment programme (FSAP) set for fiscal years 1993-95.

Chukwuma Obidegwu, World Bank resident economist in Uganda, told Reuters the FSAP marked the beginning of a major drive in revamping Uganda's run-down financial sector under a six-year Western-backed economic programme.

Under the FSAP, Uganda will restructure loss-making public

financial institutions and generate a more active private role in its financial sector.

"This is our major thrust right now in structural adjustment because the financial sector is very weak and it is a critical element of any growing economy," Mr. Obidegwu said.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the bank have both encouraged Uganda as it struggles to rehabilitate an economy destroyed by years of civil war, mismanagement and corruption.

The inflation rate has dropped from more than 200 per cent in 1986.

Pioneers consolidated pretax profit falls 52%

TOKYO (AP) — Pioneer Electric Corp., Japan's major audio-video equipment maker, has said its consolidated pretax profit for the last fiscal year fell 52 per cent to 28.45 billion yen (\$256.3 million) from the previous year.

Pioneer blamed the domestic sales slump and the higher yen during fiscal 1992 — which ended March 31 — for the plunge in profits and the fall-back in revenue.

The company posted a consolidated net sales of 589.7 billion yen (\$5.3 billion) during the year, down 3.8 per cent from the previous year.

Of the total, domestic net sales fell 10.9 per cent to 223.9 billion yen (\$2.0 billion), while overseas sales rose 1.1 per cent to 365.8 billion yen (\$3.3 billion), Pioneer said.

With consumers tightening their belts because of the nation's

economic slump, decline in domestic sales largely came from a drop in sales of compact stereos and Karaoke systems, the company said.

Its net income fell 62.1 per cent to 10.78 billion yen (\$97.1 million), mainly because of higher ratio of cost of sales to net sales resulting from the yen's strength.

The yen's strength means tough times in overseas markets and on the whole less returns for exporters.

Pioneer stirred criticism earlier this year when the company told 35 employees over 50 years of age to "voluntarily" retire early, or they would be fired.

The company later apologised, but only extended the resignation deadline for the 35 without rescinding it.

During the economic slowdown, many Japanese firms have announced job cuts.

Nigerian central bank takes over ailing banks

LAGOS (R) — The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has taken over the affairs of five troubled commercial banks and says it will take similar action against others that fail to meet minimum requirements, state radio reported Friday. The radio named the five banks, among about 120 operating in Nigeria, as New Nigerian Bank, African Continental Bank, Pan-African Bank, Mercantile Bank of Nigeria and Cooperative and Commerce Bank.

CBN Deputy Governor Victor Odozi, quoted by the radio, said the aim was to check the "deteriorating financial condition" of the banks.

"All corrective measures by the regulatory authority to resolve financial problems in the past failed because their owners did not respond to efforts aimed

at recapitalising the banks," the radio said. The CBN has formed new boards for the five banks and says the Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation will assume responsibility for them. Independent auditors will be called in.

"Banks were also warned that if (the CBN) would not hesitate to take appropriate supervisory action against any bank that failed to meet minimum requirements set for them," the radio said, without giving details of the requirements. Banking sources say some banks have been hurt by poor management, questionable loans and fraud.

Lagos state governor Michael Otedola said in April that fraud cost local banks \$47 million in the first four months of 1993 and that some of it was by the banks' own staff.

ECONOMIC NEWS IN BRIEF

Syria ratifies European bank loan

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria has ratified a 20.4 million European Currency Units (\$24.9 million) loan agreement with the Luxembourg-based European Bank for Investment to help finance a new dam, the Official Gazette said. The dam will be built near the port city of Latakia 300 kilometres northwest of Damascus at a cost of \$158.5 million. The Syrian government will provide about \$134 million. The loan will be repaid in 15 years plus a five-year grace period in 30 instalments. It will have a soft annual interest rate of 4.9 per cent.

Chargeurs sheds 1,000 jobs

PARIS (AFP) — The French Chargeurs textile and communications group is to shed more than 1,000 jobs, or more than 10 per cent of the workforce, in the first half of the year, company president Jerome Seydoux has said. The company has carried out a massive restructuring of its textile operations in recent years. The cost of the latest measures would push the company into losses during the first half but sectorial activities were expected to recover from the second half, he said.

Tunisia to encourage exports, investment

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's government has approved a draft code to encourage exports and foreign investment in the country, a copy of the document showed Friday. Exporters would be wholly exempt from taxation on profits and revenues over a 10-year period and 50 per cent exempt thereafter, according to the code. They would also be allowed to import made available to their production and to sell on the local market freely inputs for their production and to sell on the local market. Reforms of foreign exchange rules adopted this year already allow foreign investors free transfer of their capital, revenues and profits. The new code, which is expected to be enforced in the next few weeks, also includes incentives for foreign investments involving the transfer of technology, agriculture and protection of the environment.

French steel firm files for bankruptcy

SAARBRUECKEN, Germany (AFP) — German steel company Saarstahl-Voelklingen A.G., controlled by French group Usinor-Sacilor, has filed for bankruptcy, Saarland Premier Oskar Lafontaine announced. According to the regional daily Saarbruecker Zeitung, the company, employing 7,200 people, is losing 30 million marks (\$9 million) a month. It said the worsening of the firm's position was due to imports from eastern Europe and to the closing of the U.S. market to European steels. The company is 70 per cent controlled by Usinor-Sacilor, which the Saarland state holds a 27.5 per cent stake.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY MAY 24, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You have been tied down to all sorts of exacting duties of a down to earth nature and although you feel that you want to run away from them, they would only accumulate dust and be waiting when you return.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have a need to make a change for the more practical where home and/or family matters are concerned so do so with the knowledge of your own plan.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You see some better ways, long accepted, by which to attend to everyday preoccupations so let those you work alongside of know about them and use these advances systems, etc.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You can now have your mind dwell upon the practical and material aspects so think out ways to have more of this world's goods and go after them.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your ability to see all sides of any situation and give the most sensible answers about personal matters is now touched off to your advantage.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Think about what you can do to eliminate wishful thinking and get into the nitty gritty of whatever faces you and solve them in such a fashion.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have a very good day now to plan your activities according to accepted rules of modes of conduct and make them to your advantage.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A great day for accepting an opportunity now present to open up your consciousness to more benefits you have not had that can be put in active use.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Consider well the various pleasures you have long found to bring

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

"Regular chicken nuggets are made from breasts and thighs. Lite chicken nuggets are made from feathers."

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

THE Daily Crossword by Roger Coburn

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across: 1. Gender: abbr. 2. Remains 3. Projecting mass of rock 4. Legendary knowledge 5. Little bit 6. Ancient Persian 7. Singer Pinza 8. All in 9. Very much 10. Farm building 11. Tresses 12. Whirlpool 15. Offspring 16. Tail 17. structure 18. European 19. Flavourful 20. Number of 21. Muses 23. Recorder 24. Flavourful 25. Part out of town 26. Number of 27. Author Parber 28. Remainder 29. Projecting mass of rock 30. Legendary knowledge 31. Little bit 32. Ancient Persian 33. Military student 34. "Fresh Prince of — Ar" 35. Snatch 36. Field's partner 37. Solidarity 38. Breed of cattle 39. Poet Tassad 40. "Building — the setting" 41. Force 42. Advantage 43. Flair 44. Emerald Isle 45. Dwindle

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YAHND
DUGAY
FEANED
DUSAIR

WHAT DID THE EXUBERANT WIFE DO WHEN HER HUSBAND STRUCK OIL?

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: SHE

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: COWER JULEP TRIBAL ANEMIA
Answer: What you might call this barter's establishment—A CLIP JOINT

Cambodians vote in large numbers despite Khmer Rouge threats

PHNOM PENH (AP) — Large numbers of Cambodians hungry for democracy pushed their way into polling stations Sunday for their first multiparty election in two decades.

More than 10,000 U.N. troops guarded against Khmer Rouge guerrillas opposing the election.

In southern Kampot province, a shell fired by the Khmer Rouge crashed near three polling stations. Then 100 guerrillas stormed one of the stations and held several U.N. policemen and Cambodian electoral workers for an hour before releasing them unharmed, a U.N. official said.

U.N. officials shut three stations as a precaution, said the official, who demanded anonymity. Khmer Rouge activities in a few other provinces caused some disruptions of voting, "but nothing very serious," said the U.N. peacekeeping mission chief, Yasushi Akashi. "Throughout the country, the (voter) turnout has been very, very gratifying," he said.

The polls opened at 8 a.m. (0100 GMT) and closed at 4 p.m. (0900 GMT). The U.N.-organised election ends Friday.

In several areas of the country, people voted within kilometres of falling shells. Even in the tense northwest province of Siem Reap, where many people had said they were too scared of the Khmer Rouge to vote, turnout was higher than expected. In many areas, the eagerness could hardly be controlled.

In Kompong Cham province, just northeast of Phnom Penh, people jammed the main town's three polling stations despite early monsoon rains and the many Khmer Rouge in the province. Some came hours before the polls opened.

"It doesn't ease up. They keep pushing the door," said an international elections monitor, Elaine Douglas-Noel of Jamaica. "We had to post a police officer to hold them back. This is how much they want democracy."

Despite rains in Phnom Penh too, crowds shoved at the gates of the Olympic Stadium to enter the city's main voting station as peacekeepers scrambled to keep order.

"I had to come to vote because this is the first time in my life I am choosing a leader to represent Cambodia," said Cheng Ongeng, 63.

Voters said they didn't fear the Khmer Rouge because of the presence of U.N. troops.

"The Khmer Rouge have failed today," said the U.S. mission chief, Charles Twining. "This leaves the Khmer Rouge in the forest and I hope they like it there. I'm absolutely convinced that technically, this is being conducted in a manner that is free and fair."

It is the first multiparty election since the 1972 voting under a U.S.-backed government. For the past two decades, Cambodians have known only civil war and bloody revolution.

U.N. troops with rifles and flak jackets have been deployed at the some 1,500 polling sites nationwide. They frisked voters for weapons and checked their bags with metal detectors as they entered the sites.

Of the 20 parties, the ruling, communist-style Cambodian People's Party and the pro-West Royalist Party (FUNCINPEC) are expected to take the most votes. The election is for a 120-



A U.N. civilian police holding a metal detector tries to control Cambodian voters surging in a polling centre on the first of the U.N. organised general elections (AFP photo)

member Constituent Assembly that is to adopt a democratic constitution within three months, then form a government.

Mr. Akashi said Saturday that while the ideal of the Cambodian peace accord had not been achieved, "the minimum acceptable conditions for free and fair elections" exist.

The Khmer Rouge signed the 1991 accord to authorise the U.N. mission but then pulled out of the peace process, saying the mission failed to supervise the government, as required by the accord.

U.N. analysts say the Khmer Rouge fears the government will win the election and gain a stamp of legitimacy.

During the campaign, Khmer

Rouge guerrillas launched a series of attacks apparently intended to scare off voters. They also threatened to kill those who voted. The government has been linked to dozens of political killings, especially directed against FUNCINPEC, and to widespread intimidation of voters.

U.N. officials in Kompong Cham chased away government agents who loitered outside a polling station Sunday, apparently pressuring people to vote for the government.

FUNCINPEC leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh said his father, national reconciliation leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk, would talk with the Khmer Rouge after the election.

Hopes for peace rose after Prince Sihanouk, the only leader accepted by all Cambodian factions including the Khmer Rouge, returned home Saturday from several weeks abroad to support the elections.

The Khmer Rouge forced radical communism on the nation during its 1975-79 rule, killing perhaps 1.5 million people by slave labour and executions. A Vietnamese invasion ousted the group, which then fought the pro-Hanoi government.

Fighting between the government and the Khmer Rouge, mostly small-scale and limited to certain areas, has continued throughout the U.N. mission's 14-month presence.

Car thieves caught by policeman on bicycle

CAPE TOWN (R) — A Cape Town policeman on a bicycle chased a gang of car thieves for four kilometres. He blazed away with his gun as he pumped the pedals and the stolen car veered off the road. He arrested two men, police said.

Lawsuit seeks new probe of Presley's death

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (R) — A lawsuit has been filed by Memphis officials seeking a new independent probe into the cause of rock 'n' roll legend Elvis Presley's death in 1977. The suit was filed in Davidson County Chancery Court in Nashville Friday by the Shelby County Commission, which is the governing board for the county. Assistant Shelby County Attorney Bill Gibbons, who filed the suit, said he hopes the legal action will prompt Tennessee state officials to start a new investigation. Mr. Gibbons said the state's registrar of vital records "is obligated to investigate irregularities in death certificates." But according to the suit, Registrar Paula Taylor "has made no effort to even study the issue comprehensively" since the county commission voted in April 1991 to ask for an investigation. In that resolution, the commission cited the book, *The Death Of Elvis: What Really Happened*, quoting doctors who said Presley died from a drug overdose. Presley's sudden death at his home in Memphis at the age of 42 was caused by heart disease, according to chief state medical examiner Dr. Charles Haylan. But Mr. Gibbons said in the lawsuit that the state has consistently refused to open the autopsy report and to carry out a "thorough, objective inspection of all medical records."

U.K. police keep severed ear on ice

SOUTHAMPTON, England (R) — Police were keeping a severed ear in a refrigerator at their station in Southampton to await its owner, who had it bitten off in a pub brawl. "This man lost a substantial part of his ear and needs urgent medical attention," detective inspector Ray Burr said after the fight. "We would also like to talk to him because this was an extremely vicious attack."

Prince Charles hails bricks in hotel toilets

LONDON (R) — Britain's Prince Charles wants luxury hotels to help conserve natural resources with practical measures such as bricks in toilet cisterns to save water. The future king, long a promoter of environmental issues, told an international hoteliers conference in London that environment-friendly schemes were not five-star business. But, he said, the pro-environment campaign relied on the "very unglamorous business of reducing environmental impacts step by step, pound by pound, flush by flush," he praised the Hilton Hotel in London for cutting back on water used to flush toilets by simply "banging a brick into each and every cistern." The conference, organised to launch a guide of practical measures drawn up by 11 leading hotels such as the Fort, Hilton and Intercontinental chains, also heard British green campaigner Jonathan Porritt condemn daily changing of towels in hotels. "It is extraordinary to think that people are paying perhaps £200 (£310) a night as so dirty that they need a new towel every night," he said. Guests should also turn off lights at night, he added.

Britain studies 'floating jails' to ease crowding

LONDON (R) — Britain is considering using ships as jails as a way to reduce prison overcrowding, officials said. Mooring ships off the coast to accommodate low security prisoners was one of a series of options under consideration, a spokesman from the Home Office (Interior Ministry) said. According to the Independent on Sunday, two vessels moored off Cumbria in northwest England could accommodate 800 prisoners — people nearing the end of their sentence or prisoners awaiting trial. The Home Office said officials had studied similar floating detention units in New York Harbour. A home office spokesman told the paper prisoners were not now critically overcrowded. In mid-May, the prison population was 43,501, with 2,669 places still empty. In recent months Britain's Conservative government has come under fire for experimenting with a partial privatisation of the prison service.

2-horse race for top Cannes prize — critics

CANNES, France (R) — To believe the critics, this year's Cannes Film Festival competition is a two-horse race. But they have often been wrong before.

Jane Campion's *The Piano* and Chen Kaige's *Red* are the two main contenders for the top prize. *The Piano* has won by far the warmest praise in a selection of 23 competitive films widely regarded as below Cannes' usual standards.

All will be revealed Monday night when the 16-member jury headed by French director Louis Malle emerges from its cocoon of strict secrecy to announce the Golden Palm winners.

The Piano is a passionate love story set in the wilds of 19th century New Zealand, was so much the advance favourite that festival organisers feared Campion would be given the Golden Palm on arrival at the airport.

All that changed when critics saw *Red*, a three-hour Chinese epic about actors at the Peking Opera during the most turbulent events of the 20th century.

"Chen Kaige has bitten off an epic mouthful of modern Chinese history, skillfully interwoven with the splendid stylised Peking Opera story of a king and his Concubine," wrote the trade magazine *Moviemaker*. "All ingredients masterfully blended into a delicious bowl of chop suey."

Both films represent a challenge to the long-standing dominance of U.S. and European cinema, both at Cannes and around the world.

No film from China or Australia (The Piano is a co-production) has ever won the Golden Palm.

The last film from outside the United States and Europe to clinch the top prize was *The Ballad Of Narayana* from Japan 10 years ago.

This year's competition includes three Australian films, one Chinese and one Taiwanese — suggesting Cannes is catching up with enthusiasm at other festivals for Asian and Australasian productions.

The Americans disappointed Cannes this year before the festival had even started — Robert Altman, Martin Scorsese and Jonathan Demme all held back their latest films for the Venice Festival in September.

And the most keenly awaited European film, Wim Wenders' *Faraway, So Close*, was panned by critics as self-indulgent and confused.

Cannes juries are notoriously unpredictable — last year's winner, Bill August's *The Best Intentions*, was far from being the critics' favourite.

Moreover, Malle has a track record of non-conformism — in 1968 he resigned from the jury and helped close the festival down at the height of a student and worker uprising in France.

Outside tips for the top prize include British director Ken Loach's *Raining Stones* and Frenchman Alain Cavalier's *Libra* Me, an experimental film dealing with mental repression without dialogue or incidental music.

Mandela: ANC to unilaterally announce election date

NEWCASTLE, South Africa (R) — Nelson Mandela said Sunday his African National Congress (ANC) would unilaterally announce by the end of the month a date for South Africa's first democratic elections.

"We have decided to announce before the end of May an exact day for elections before April next year," Mr. Mandela told a 3,000-strong rally in a mainly Indian South African district in this Natal mining town.

Multi-party negotiations, including those of the ANC and the government, are widely reported to have privately decided on an election date and had been expected to jointly announce it at a meeting of their leaders near Johannesburg on June 2.

The announcement was Mr. Mandela's second surprise statement during a two-day tour of volatile Natal province. On Saturday he raised the government's hackles by suggesting 14-year-olds should have the vote.

The setting of an election date by the end of May is the main aim of a month of mass action orchestrated by the ANC and its allies which has spilled over into violence. At least 20 people have been killed.

The planned June 2 announcement was considered a compromise to meet the demands of ANC supporters and the government's desire not to appear to be forced into making an early announcement.

Mr. Mandela's call for the voting age to be lowered from 18 was the first serious suggestion of its kind by the ANC and appeared aimed at appealing to militant black youths angered at the slow

pace of democracy talks. "They say a person under the age of 18 can't think correctly and make wise choices. We reject that and demand the voting age should be from 14," Mr. Mandela said.

The ANC leader said Sunday the previous day's battles between ANC supporters and those of the rival Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in a township near Johannesburg which left up to 15 people dead and at least 60 wounded were "in the interests of the (ruling) National Party."

"The solution to the problems of South Africa is to have a free and fair election... to overthrow the present government by peaceful means. They are unfit to govern," Mr. Mandela said.

"This violence is in the interests of the National Party. The government retains the primary responsibility for the violence," he said.

Law and Order Minister Herman Kriel urged the ANC and the IFP to redouble their efforts to control their followers.

"I again reiterate the government's call for an urgent moratorium on all mass action. Organisations such as the ANC and IFP will simply have to do far more to address the culture of intolerance between their supporters," Mr. Kriel said in a statement.

Addressing a few whites in a crowd of supporters earlier Sunday, the ANC leader said South Africa's white community had skills needed to help build a new democratic country.

"One of the appeals we make is that (the whites) do not leave South Africa. They must stay with us," he said.

China, U.K. to have more talks on Hong Kong

PEKING (R) — China and Britain ended their third round of talks about political reform in Hong Kong Sunday with no sign of any agreement other than to keep talking.

A joint statement issued after three days of negotiations said merely that a fourth round of talks would be held on May 28 and 29.

The British negotiator, Sir Robin McLaren, told reporters the atmosphere was good. But he would not be drawn on the content of the discussions other than to say: "The work we're doing is quite complicated work."

Mr. McLaren, Britain's ambassador to China, faces a daunting task of trying to bridge a chasm of mistrust and anger that has divided London and Peking since Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten unveiled plans last year to widen the franchise in the colony before it returns to China in 1997.

Peking is furious at what it sees as an attempt to perpetuate British control after the handover and maintains that Mr. Patten's plans contravene previous Sino-British agreements.

However, there is new optimism in Hong Kong that Peking is keen to adopt a business-as-usual approach to the territory, even as the political crisis drags on.

Hong Kong stocks closed at a record high Friday after Peking endorsed three business contracts valid past 1997, allowing a long-delayed cable television project to go ahead. China had earlier threatened to scrap after 1997 any contracts signed by the colonial government without its approval.

Sino-British relations thawed slightly with the resumption of the talks on Hong Kong's democratic future last month.

World dithers over Bosnia — Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnia's Muslims have poured scorn on the West's new strategy in their stricken republic, saying the world dithers while the slaughter continues unabated.

Sarajevo's Muslim-controlled radio reported that Serb fire rained from dawn on the town of Magaj in northern Bosnia Sunday, causing many civilian casualties.

"The earth under this completely devastated town is shaking with explosions," the radio said.

In the Bosnian capital, a government statement said "impermissible procrastination and the complete ineffectiveness of the entire international community" had encouraged Bosnia's Serbs to press on with attacks in defiance of U.N. resolutions.

After Washington and its allies forged what they called a joint strategy to contain the war and repair the rift in Western ranks over intervention, Sarajevo and surrounding areas experienced one of the bloodiest days for weeks Saturday.

Up to 15 people were killed and more than 100 wounded in seven hours of mortar and artillery attacks by both sides.

U.N. peacekeepers said it was not clear who started the carnage, which marked the first anniversary of Bosnia-Herzegovina's admission into the United Nations.

"It was a sad testimony yesterday to the situation we face here. We've seen both sides... shelling civilian targets," U.N. Protection Force spokesman Commander Barry Frewer said.

Saturday's government statement called for international military action to halt the Bosnian Serb army, now in control of 70 per cent of Bosnia after 13 months of war, and for the lifting of a U.N. arms embargo for Muslim-led forces.

That formula, championed only days ago by U.S. President Bill Clinton, seemed more remote than ever after the United States, Russia, France, Britain and Spain agreed on a common strategy intended to contain the war and promote peace efforts.

Their foreign ministers announced measures including the offer of U.S. air power to protect U.N. forces in "safe areas" for Muslims if U.N. soldiers came under attack and to ensure that arms supplies were cut off to Bosnia's Serbs and Croats.

They stopped short of measures like stationing U.S. forces in Bosnia or trying to impose on Bosnian Serbs the U.N.-backed peace plan which they have overwhelmingly rejected.

Mr. Clinton said the new strategy, expected to be codified in Security Council resolutions, would limit "the possibility of a quagmire" and help confine for

conflict to Bosnia.

"We're still pushing for a political settlement that has some reasonable land for the Bosnian Muslims," Mr. Clinton said.

But he stressed that the United States was "clearly not going to get involved there, either unilaterally or multilaterally... on one of the sides... in a civil war."

The initiative calls for the rigorous enforcement of existing U.N. sanctions against rump Yugoslavia.

It also offers to deploy monitors on Yugoslavia's borders with Bosnia to ensure that Belgrade was meeting its pledge this month to cut off strategic supplies to the Serbs.

Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic last week rejected the idea of monitors, a position which was confirmed by a senior Yugoslav official Sunday.

"They (the international community) do not respect what Yugoslavia has done. There is no respect for Yugoslav efforts nor for our national dignity," the official told Reuters.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said Sunday he would comply with a plan to set up U.S.-protected safe areas to protect Muslims in Bosnia.

"Yes I will certainly," Mr. Karadzic told a British Broadcasting Corporation radio interviewer when asked whether he would accept the joint action plan agreed by the Western allies.

IRA bomb blows up Belfast hotel

BELFAST (R) — The Irish Republican Army (IRA), stepping up its bombing campaign after Northern Ireland council elections, blew up a car bomb outside a Belfast hotel Saturday night.

It was the third car bomb attack in the British province in three days by the IRA which is battling to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

Police said that in the latest attack a car was left outside the Drumkeen Hotel in Belfast.

Asked if the IRA had issued any warning, a police spokesman said: "A telephone warning was

received by staff about 30 minutes before. Several people were treated for shock after the blast. Damage to the hotel was extensive."

This attack followed two huge 1,000 pound (456 kilos) car bomb attacks in Belfast and Portadown.

Thursday's Belfast bomb, which went off just as counting began after Northern Ireland's local council elections, injured 20 people and damaged some of Belfast's most famous historic buildings including the Grand

Opera House.

On Saturday, another 1,000 pound bomb tore a hole through the centre of Portadown, injuring two policemen and four civilians.

Sinn Fein, political wing of the IRA, made the biggest gain of any party in the local elections.

Traditionally, the IRA tones down its guerrilla campaign during elections to allow its political wing to take centre stage.

Republican sources have also warned that the IRA may now put back in top gear its bombing campaign on the British mainland.

Gorbachev sees possible political return

PARIS (R) — Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview published Sunday he considered himself a statesman in waiting and was ready to play a political role in Russia or in the Yugoslav conflict if asked.

Mr. Gorbachev, who is to visit the Netherlands and France this week, told *Le Journal De Dimanche* (The Sunday) that he would like to see the (Soviet) reforms in 1985 could come together again on condition that society asks them to return.

"If society reaches the conclusion that Gorbachev should play a different role from now, then I will consider it. But if there is not this demand, this signal from society, I don't want to impose myself," he said.

Asked if he considered himself in reserve like General Charles De Gaulle before he took power in 1958, the former Communist leader said: "Yes, let us say yes, absolutely."

"I am still doing and I could do lots of things," he said.

Mr. Gorbachev, who now heads a think-tank in Moscow, called for an international summit to create a new body to resolve the conflict in former Yugoslavia.

Asked if he saw a role for himself in peacemaking in the conflict, he said: "If the decision is taken to create a powerful political and intellectual group to prepare such a solution, I am ready to participate at every working level."

He said he would discuss the idea with French President Francois Mitterrand when they meet next Saturday.

But Mr. Gorbachev stressed that he supported the action of international mediators Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance and had no intention of undermining their work.

The former president, who resigned upon the breakup of the Soviet Union in December 1991, said the situation between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and parliament had reached deadlock and there should be fresh elections for both the presidency and the legislature.

Criticising Mr. Yeltsin, he said the policy pursued since January 1992 was one of "adventurism" full of demagogic promises which could not be kept and which had disappointed the people.

Meanwhile the Russian government and its opponents are stepping up their campaigns ahead of a crucial constitutional

meeting on June 5 which could go some way to resolving the country's power crisis.

President Yeltsin wants the conference to adopt a draft constitution which would set up a French-style presidential republic giving him sweeping powers over the government and a new bicameral parliament.

Key Yeltsin aide Sergei Shakhrai told a news conference Saturday that he had already talked to half Russia's 88 regions and republics and most in principle supported Mr. Yeltsin's draft.

ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

"Now I can say that nobody is denying the necessity of a new constitution for Russia," he said.

His comments may help dispel the threat of a damaging boycott by the increasingly fractious regions and republics, who are demanding more sovereignty over their own affairs.

"All regions I've dealt with so far... are ready to send their representatives to the assembly," Mr. Shakhrai said.

The new constitution would have to tackle the problem of giving the various territories and regions the same level of autonomy enjoyed by the country's 21

ethnic republics, he said.

Conservative groups flatly oppose Mr. Yeltsin's draft, which they say paves the way for dictatorship, and claim to have mustered enough signatures to force a nationwide referendum on bringing back a "Soviet Socialist constitution."

Hardliners said Friday they would hold their own constitutional conference at the same time and would also invite regional spokesmen to Moscow to draw up a separate draft.

Interfax News Agency said the hardline National Salvation Front had warned it would picket the city centre and state buildings on June 5 to 12 to protect the current constitution, a much-amended version of the former Soviet-era basic law.

Parliamentary Chairman and Yeltsin arch-rival Ruslan Khasbulatov, who accuses the Russian leader of acting illegally, has been put on the defensive by the partial defection of some key parliamentary allies.

One of his deputies, Nikolai Ryabov, welcomes the idea of the meeting, apparently influenced by the support shown for Mr. Yeltsin in an April 25 national referendum.

Sports

thieves caught
policeman on
cycle

suit seeks new
be of Presley's

Tennessee (R) — A Cape
police officer on a bicycle
caught two thieves for
stealing a car. The officer
pumped the brakes and
the car rolled over. He
arrested two thieves.

SHINGTON (R) — Riddick
Bowe knocked out Jesse
Ferguson at the end of the
second round in a six-punch
combination to retain his
World Heavyweight title Saturday.

The Dean T. Bowe, 25, easily
slashed his jab through to
Ferguson's head, which was an
immobile target for the short
fight.

owe, now 34-0, dropped the 36-
year-old Ferguson with a left
hook in the first round. The
knockout was over, but somehow
managed to get up and referee
Larry Hazzard counted to
10, the bell sounded to end the
round.

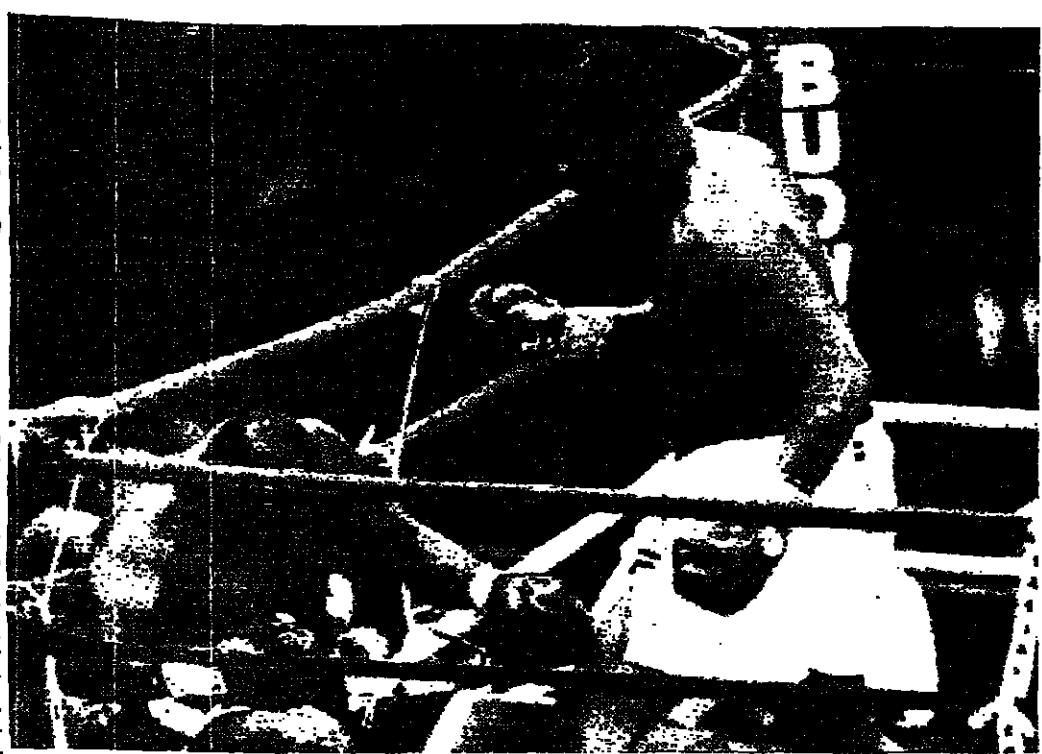
arguson, a 40-1 underdog, wobbled
to his feet, where there was no
stool waiting for him. He was
forced to stand to collect himself
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stool.

arguson came out in the second
round and stayed directly in front
of Bowe, who simply landed
six consecutive shots, dropping
the fighter like a rock and shortly
after he called the fight off 17
seconds into the second round.

was Bowe's second title defence
and his short fight against a
hopelessly overmatched opponent.
His first defence last February,
Bowe stopped Al Dokes at two
minutes and 19 seconds of the
first round.

guson was on the undercard of
that fight and highly-regarded
contender Ray Mercer to the
title shot.

guson, now 19-10, weighed 224
pounds (9 kg). He was 20 pounds
(9 kg) lighter and



Riddick Bowe (right) stands over Jesse Ferguson after sending him to the mat at the end of the first round. Bowe won by a knockout in the second round (AFP photo)

Bowe stops Ferguson in second round

WASHINGTON (R) — Riddick Bowe knocked out Jesse Ferguson at the end of the second round in a six-punch combination to retain his World Heavyweight title Saturday.

The Dean T. Bowe, 25, easily slashed his jab through to Ferguson's head, which was an immobile target for the short fight.

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guson, now 19-10, weighed 224 pounds (9 kg). He was 20 pounds (9 kg) lighter and

three inches shorter than the 6-foot, five-inch (1.95 metre) champion.

"This is what it's like to be a bad man," Bowe said after the fight, "which drew a sparse crowd of about 9,000 in the 30,000-seat setup for the bout at RFK Stadium."

It was the first time a world heavyweight championship fight had been held in the nation's capital since Joe Louis defeated Buddy Baer at Griffith Stadium May 23, 1941 — almost 52 years ago to the day.

"If I put my mind to it, I can be in any shape I want. I tested my left uppercut. My uppercut is lethal. Jesse has never been rocked like this," Bowe said.

"I'm not a mercer. I was focused and determined. This is how you're supposed to take out your opponent when you're a champion."

Bowe won all three major titles — WBA, World Boxing Council (WBC) and the International Boxing Federation titles — by winning a unanimous decision over Evander Holyfield after 12 rounds last November.

Bowe, who earned about \$7 million Saturday, surrendered his WBC title rather than make his first defence against Briton Lennox Lewis, who was then awarded the title.

The IBF did not sanction Saturday's fight because the organisation had not ranked Ferguson, who earned \$500,000 for getting pumelled by Bowe.

Ferguson's wife, Cynthia, had told him about six months ago that he should think about retiring after Saturday's fight.

It appears her advice was sound.

Sonics to meet Suns

SEATTLE (R) — It came down to overtime in the seventh and deciding game, but the Seattle SuperSonics got the job done at crunch time Saturday to beat the Houston Rockets and advance to the Western Conference finals.

Sam Perkins hit a feadeaway jumper with 28.5 seconds left in overtime to give Seattle a three-point lead and Shawn Kemp converted two free throws with less than one second remaining as the SuperSonics held off the Rockets 103-100.

A desperation three-point attempt by Houston centre Hakeem Olajuwon at the buzzer failed to hit the rim, ending only the fourth playoff series in National Basketball Association history in which a seventh game was decided in overtime.

Seattle will play the Phoenix Suns in the best-of-seven Western Conference finals beginning Monday in Phoenix. The Suns eliminated the San Antonio Spurs in six games.

Meanwhile the much-anticipated Eastern Conference finals between the two-time defending NBA champion Chicago Bulls and the New York Knicks begins in New York.

"We held our composure, played good basketball, made good decisions in the second half and made the shots when we needed them," Kemp said after Seattle earned its first trip to the Conference finals since 1987.

Seattle's Ricky Pierce, who led all scorers with 25 points, hit a 10-foot baseline jumper with 24 seconds left in regulation to tie the game at 93-93. Houston had a chance to win, but Kenny Smith missed a corner jumper at the buzzer to force overtime.

Olajuwon, led the Rockets with 23 points and 17 rebounds. Kemp, who finished with 18 points and 11 rebounds, sank both free throws with eight-tenths of a second left to seal the Seattle victory.

Perkins hit all eight of his field goal attempts after the half and finished with 23 points, including 18 in the second half and overtime.

"It was a trying series" Perkins said afterwards. "And we still got a long way to go."

World Cup qualifying matches Jordan, Iraq clash today

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

JORDAN AND IRAQ face-off Monday afternoon in a crucial and deciding match of the Asian Group A World Cup qualifying matches at Al Hassan stadium in Irbid.

The Iraqi team will be playing the first of their matches. They had a practice session but their coach refused to give any statements or announce the lineup of players.

Hosts, Jordan, will be aiming for a win after conceding a 1-1 draw with group underdogs, Yemen, in the opening match Saturday.

The Kingdom's team had last played their Iraqi opponents last August in the Jordan International Soccer tournament in which Jordan upset Iraq 2-0 to win the tournament.

Jordanian coach Alexander Maximov is expected to change the lineup of players as mohammad Al Khazali has a red card booking, and some strikers did not live up to expectations and seemed to lack fitness — a fact Yemen took advantage of to score the equalising goal in the final two minutes.

In a post-match press conference, Maximov admitted that



Iraqi manager Adnan Derjal (centre) instructs his players during practice in Irbid (AFP photo)

Jordan that played an unimpressive match, well below their usual standard. He also said that some players had failed in their defensive duties, hence the unexpected Yemeni goal.

In Saturday's late match, favourites China crushed Pakistan 5-0 in a match attended by a sparse crowd of 2000.

Hao Haidong scored China's

opening goal in the 37th minute. While Pakistan rarely approached China's goal and content ending the first half 1-0.

The Pakistani team could not hold on much longer as their defence faltered in the second half, allowing China to freely score four more goals. Gao Hongbo scored a hat-trick, netting in his team's second and third goals

in the 55th and 59th minutes. Teammate Zhai Biao scored the fourth goal in the 72nd minute, and Guo came back to score the final goal in the 83rd minute. A sixth goal by China was ruled offside by Referee Ammar Ammar of Lebanon.

In Monday's matches Jordan play Iraq at 4 p.m., while Yemen play Pakistan at 8.30 p.m.

Ivanisevic may be Europe's best hope in French Open

PARIS (R) — European hopes of ending the continent's bleakest spell in more than two decades at the French Open starting Monday may rest on the shoulders of the unpredictable Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia.

No European has won the men's singles since Sweden's Mats Wilander triumphed in 1988 and with American Jim Courier hot favourite for his third successive crown, it will take something special to stop the non-European trend.

The 21-year-old from Split is certainly something special and there are signs that he is beginning to put behind him the erratic excesses of youth to approach tennis maturity.

The only player to take a set off Courier last year at Roland Garros, Ivanisevic has become much more consistent of late and could be ready to make his best challenge yet.

Europe badly needs a winner after years in which it was perceived wisdom that the continent's plethora of clay court specialists virtually guaranteed success in Paris.

Of the 19 men's singles finals played from 1970 to 1988, Euro-

pean won 18, only Argentina's Guillermo Vilas breaking the monopoly in 1977.

The long-standing theory that Americans did not have the clay background to make the grade at the French was broken in 1989 when Michael Chang ended a 34-year spell without success.

But the American continent has now taken over, Andres Gomez of Ecuador winning in 1990 and Courier taking the last two titles.

Worse still for the Europeans, Petr Korda of the Czech Republic was the continent's only player to reach the final in the last three years — and he took only eight games off Courier in last year's showpiece.

Ivanisevic, losing finalist at Wimbledon last year to American Andre Agassi, showed a return to form after early season injury problems when he reached the final of the Italian Open in Rome this month — though he was crushed in straight sets by Courier.

The tall, big-hitting Croat believes he has the weapons to do well in Paris. "People think I'm just machine for making aces but I work very hard at all my

strokes," he said.

"I had a chance to win Roland Garros last year because I was up in the fourth set against Courier in the quarter-final and he was getting nervous. If I'd won that, we would have gone to a fifth and he's not always at his best in fifth sets.

"When I concentrate, I can play very well on clay. I can stay on the baseline like the specialists and run all day. I may be tall but I move around the court well."

As an 18-year-old Ivanisevic caused an upset in Paris by dismissing German Boris Becker in the first round before going out eventually in the quarter-finals to Austrian Thomas Muster.

Now managed by the German's mentor Ion Tiriac and coached by Becker's former trainer Bon Brett, Ivanisevic has also acquired a regular female travelling companion in girlfriend Daniela, a move he said had stabilised him a lot.

A stress fracture of the foot and an achilles tendon problem held him back earlier this year but he is getting back to his best and said he felt fresh for the two-week tournament ahead.

"I don't fear anyone when I'm playing well and I feel fine," he said. "I've already proved that."

Ivanisevic apart, Europe's best chances may come from the form players of the clay season, Spain's Bruguera or 18-year-old Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev. But Bruguera has regularly flopped in Paris at the past and it may be too early for the rapidly improving Medvedev.

Stefan Edberg of Sweden, losing finalist in 1989, cannot be ruled out even though he is not too happy on clay but Courier may feel his stiffest challenge could still be from outside Europe — in the shape of fellow-American Pete Sampras, the man who deposed him as world number one earlier this year.

The women's tournament looks wide open after the withdrawal of reigning champion Monica Seles of Yugoslavia following the stabbing incident in Hamburg last month.

Two former champions Steffi Graf of Germany and Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario start as favourites but Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina and a second Spaniard, Conchita Martinez, have title ambitions too.

Last gasp PSG winner leaves Marseille waiting

PARIS (R) — A last gasp winner as St Germain substitute cois Calderaro left European finalists Marseille waiting for a record fifth consecutive League Cup crown Saturday.

Idarero scrambled home a Le Guen corner in the 90th te to give the Parisians a 1-0 ver Nantes at the Parc des es to keep the title race open.

Marseille had moved six points of PSG and Monaco Thursday with a 1-0 win in Valenciennes, with only two games to the title had their two rivals to win.

Monaco obliged, going down Metz to a Nicolas Huysman and the Parisians looked as y would never break down a

determined defensive performance by a Nantes side seeking a UEFA Cup berth.

But Calderaro's goal left the championship alive until next week, at least, when Paris St Germain visit Marseille, three days after their European Cup final date with AC Milan in Munich.

PSG must win at the Stade Velodrome to stay in the race for the final match of the season June 2.

The late goal cost Nantes the chance of going above Bordeaux into fourth place, a place which would qualify them for the UEFA Cup.

Bordeaux lost 2-0 in Toulouse, whose striker Anthony Bancarel scored twice to guarantee the home side a place in the first

division next season.

But Nimes are now certain to go down after suffering the indignity of a 5-2 defeat in Auxerre, whose forward Lilian Laslandes scored a hat-trick.

Toulon are almost certain to accompany them after losing 2-1 at home to Le Havre. Ivory Coast striker Joel Tiehi scored a late winner.

Caen forward Xavier Gravelaine, who had suffered a lean spell in the last two months,

struck twice to give his team a 2-0 win over Sochaux and take his tally to 20 for the season, one fewer than leading scorer Alen Boksic of Marseille, who netted Thursday's winner in Valenciennes.

Voeller to play in Japan: Marseille's German striker Rudi Voeller will sign a contract with Japanese soccer club Yomiuri Nippon FC in June, news reports said Sunday.

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠10863 ♠A873 ♣K ♠J532
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Dbl ?
What action do you take?
A.—You certainly don't want to bid a bad suit, so we wouldn't fault you if you choose to pass. However, we don't like twiddling our thumbs idly when we hold sound responding values, so our choice would be one no trump. If the opponents compete further, at least they will have to do so at a level higher than they like.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q652 ♠643 ♠J92 ♠A83
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ Dbl 1 ♠ ?
What action do you take?
A.—You don't have much, but we hate passing when we have a smattering of values and a possible 4-4 fit in a major. Our choice would be one spade. It must be safer to contest the auction now than to try to back in later.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ76 ♠AJ83 ♠7 ♠AK92
The bidding has proceeded:
East South West North
1 ♠ Dbl Pass 1 ♠ ?
What do you bid now?
A.—You have a very fine hand in support of spades, worth the equivalent of 21 points. Bear in mind, however, that you have forced partner to bid on what could be a yarrow-borough, jump to three spades. That invites partner to go in game on the smell of an oil rag.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ76 ♠AJ83 ♠7 ♠AK92
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—Whether you play four or five-card majors is irrelevant. You have a balanced hand with stoppers in the unbid suits and no particular support for partner. You can describe this holding precisely by opting for one no trump as your rebid. Anything else distorts your holding.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A862 ♠KJ63 ♠Void ♠J765
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
A.—Partner's correction to your first bid doesn't even guarantee three-card support. If, indeed, North has taken a preference on a doubleton, the hand is at least a partial misfit, which suggests that you are as high as you want to be. Pass.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠94 ♠AQJ63 ♠A105 ♠Q98
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—Whether you play four or five-card majors is irrelevant. You have a balanced hand with stoppers in the unbid suits and no particular support for partner. You can describe this holding precisely by opting for one no trump as your rebid. Anything else distorts your holding.

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Attas reinstated as Yemeni premier

SANAA (Agencies) — The presidential council reinstated Haider Abu Bakr Al Attas as prime minister Sunday and asked him to form a national coalition cabinet to cement Yemen's infant multi-party democracy.

Mr. Attas, 54, had resigned after the April 27 parliamentary vote, the first multi-party elections in the Arabian Peninsula which is dominated by monarchies and one-party rule.

The state media said that the five-man ruling council, led by Ali Abdullah Saleh, president of the pre-merger North Yemen, asked Mr. Attas to form the new cabinet and he immediately began consultations for this purpose.

Mr. Attas is a member of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), which ruled the formerly Marxist South Yemen before the merger in May 1990. He was president of South Yemen before the union.

The Socialists and Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress had run Yemen in a coalition after the union. With Mr. Saleh atop the ruling council and Mr. Attas prime minister, the two parties have consolidated their grip on the executive authority.

Together, the two parties have 179 seats in the 301-member parliament and have vowed to work within the house as a single bloc.

Parliament earlier this month elected Sheikh Abdullah Hussan Al Ahmar, a co-founder of the pro-Saudi Arabian Islamic fundamentalist Al Islah party, as speaker.

The move was interpreted as an attempt to placate the fundamentalists at home and help mend fences with Saudi Arabia, Yemen's influential neighbour which reportedly viewed the parliamentary elections as a potential harbinger of political change in the conservative region.

A civil engineer by profession, Mr. Attas' previous three years as prime minister had been marred by political turmoil and economic hardships in the country of 14.5 million.

Unconfirmed reports said Mr. Saleh's party would retain 12 portfolios and both the Socialists and the Islamists would each have four members in the cabinet.

One portfolio would be offered, each to the Nasserites and the pro-Iraq Baath Party, the reports said.

Yemenis, divided for three centuries, are celebrating three years of unity that has brought unprecedented democracy but also economic hardship and political instability.

Residents of Sanaa strolled through brightly lit streets Saturday night and flags fluttered on private homes as well as official buildings.



Haider Al Attas

Residents of Sanaa strolled through brightly lit streets Saturday night and flags fluttered on private homes as well as official buildings.

But on the eve of the anniversary, and less than a month after Yemen's first multi-party elections, President Saleh conceded that Yemenis had suffered during the three since unification.

"The great success of the election should not distance us from the suffering of our people during the transitional period because of the inefficiencies of the government's economic, administrative, social and security institutions," he said.

Newspaper prices go up

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices of Jordan's newspapers, will increase to 150 fils from 100 as of Thursday to keep up with newly-imposed taxes on paper. The change in prices will affect the three daily Arabic newspapers as well as the Jordan Times but is not expected to affect weekend editions which already charge a higher price for their copy.

The price hike came after fruitless efforts by the local newspapers to dissuade the government from imposing a 25 per cent tax on newspaper. The new tax, newspaper representatives told the government on several occasions, is not equalled anywhere else in the world where newspaper prices are intentionally kept down to make them accessible to all people.

However, since the government decision still stood after these efforts, publishers say, they have little choice but to increase the price of newspaper copies, especially since they had already increased advertisement costs earlier this year.

Al Rai's, the largest circulating newspaper in Jordan, expected its expenses to increase by over half a million dinars a year with the tax increase.

"We hope that we will be able to compensate our readers for their added expense by improving the quality of news," Al Rai's Editor-in-Chief Mahmood Al Kayed told the Jordan Times.

The new taxes on paper have been in effect since early January, but newspapers waited until the middle of the year before transferring the added expense to the readers.



CAMBODIA GOES TO POLLS: A Cambodian reacts with a smile as a U.N. peacekeeper from Ghana accidentally points his gun at him while keeping order in a crowd of voters waiting at a polling centre in Phnom Penh on Sunday, the first day of U.N.-organised elections in the country (see page 8)

AFP photo

More than 700,000 pilgrims already in S. Arabia

DUBAI (R) — More than 700,000 Muslims from around the world including 100,000 Iraqis have flocked to Saudi Arabia for the annual pilgrimage to Islam's holiest city.

Thousands more were arriving each day by air, land and sea for the pilgrimage to Mecca, birthplace of the Prophet Mohammad, Saudi press reports said. Every Muslim who can afford to is obliged to perform the pilgrimage once in a lifetime.

The Haj reaches its climax on May 30, ninth day of the holy month of Dhu'l-Hijja, when a million white-robed pilgrims gather at Mount Arafat, site of the Prophet's last sermon 14 centuries ago, and three monuments representing Satan are stoned.

The following day Muslims celebrate the start of 'Eid Al Adha, when sheep are slaughtered to commemorate God's test of Abraham.

The Saudi minister of pilgrimage affairs and endowments, Abdul Wahhab Abdul Wasie, said the kingdom expects the same number of pilgrims as last year when up to two million people, almost half of them Saudis, performed the Haj.

He said the number of pilgrims last year was 40 per cent higher than in 1991 when the Gulf war over Iraq's occupation of Kuwait led many airlines to cancel flights to Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Abdul Wahhab said in a newspaper interview Saturday that Saudi Arabia was taking all steps to ensure a trouble-free Haj. "The kingdom is sparing no money or effort to help pilgrims perform their pilgrimage in security and safety," he said.

Straining transport and other facilities with its vast numbers, the Haj has often been hit by accidents causing great loss of life. The worst of recent Mecca tragedies was a stampede during the 1990 Haj in which 1,426 pilgrims were crushed to death in a tunnel. Most were from Indonesia and Turkey.

Mr. Abdul Wahhab said Saudi Arabia, custodian of Islam's holy shrines at Mecca and Medina, has spent around \$4 billion in the last two years to improve and extend facilities including the building of new roads and tunnels.

Iran holds war games amid tension

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian troops with tanks staged what Tehran called military manoeuvres on the southern border with Iraq Sunday amid rising tension triggered by escalating attacks from Baghdad-based rebels.

The Iranians said Saturday that 8,000 infantry from the Revolutionary Guards Corps and an armoured brigade would take part in the manoeuvres in oil-rich Khuzestan province in southwest Iran.

The manoeuvres were ostensibly to commemorate the May 24, 1982, liberation of the port city of Khorramshahr, 578 days after it had been captured by Iraqis in the early days of the 1980-88 Gulf war.

The seizure of the city in fierce fighting was Iran's biggest and most humiliating loss of the war and its recapture was a turning point in the conflict.

Brigadier General Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the Revolutionary Guards' ground forces, said the troops will enter Khorramshahr to "renew the glory of its liberation."

But it appeared that the manoeuvres were related to a crackdown on border incursions by the Iraq-based Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, the main Iranian opposition movement.

By several accounts, forces in the region have been on alert for several weeks because of operations by the Mujahadeen.

Gen. Jafari, announcing the crackdown Saturday, accused Iraq of violating the Aug. 20, 1988, ceasefire that ended the war by allowing the rebels to launch cross-border raids.

"We cannot accept that the enemies of our people are getting armed on the other side of the border and attacking the sacred territory of Iran," he said on the state-run Tehran Radio, monitored in Nicosia.

Providing counter-revolutionary elements and enemies with shelter and their equipment inside Iraq are...cases of flagrant violation of the ceasefire," he said.

The Mujahadeen called the accusation a prelude to "terrorist operations...and air raids" against their bases in Iraq.

Gen. Jafari said the Revolutionary Guards were "determined to continue the suppression and pursuit of the terrorist elements until...their wicked acts are absolutely repelled."

He said "counter-revolutionary elements" — Tehran-speak for the Mujahadeen — were trying to

disrupt the presidential elections scheduled for June 11.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani is running for a second four-year term amid widespread dissatisfaction over the government's failure to reverse chronic economic problems.

The Mujahadeen, seeking to exploit the internal unrest and political power struggles within the Tehran hierarchy, have escalated their attacks in recent weeks.

The regime has acknowledged several clashes and sabotage raids, including the May 12 dynamiting of eight oil pipelines near the refinery city of Abadan in Khuzestan, 16 kilometres south-east of Khorramshahr.

The Tehran regime's unusual admissions of Mujahadeen operations indicate it is alarmed at the rebels' escalating campaign.

The Mujahadeen insists the attacks were carried out by its fighters based inside Iran and were launched from Iraq.

But diplomatic and oil industry sources have told the Associated Press that there is increasing evidence that many of the recent Mujahadeen operations were mounted from Iraq.

Most of the targets the rebels say they hit were in western Iran near the 1,180 kilometres frontier, although some smaller operations were reported deep in the Iranian hinterland.

Cross-border attacks by the Mujahadeen and its military arm, the National Liberation Army of Iran, could not be launched without the approval of Iraq.

When the Iran-Iraq war ended, Iraq reined in the Mujahadeen. But Baghdad and Tehran have yet to sign a formal peace treaty and are increasingly trading accusations of border incursions.

Baghdad has accused Iran of shelling villages in northern Iraq in operations against Iranian Kurdish rebels based there. Kurdish sources claimed Iranian armoured columns had thrust several kilometres inside Iraq in recent weeks.

Iraq has repeatedly said Revolutionary Guards have supported Shiite Muslim rebels fighting Baghdad in southern Iraq.

There has been speculation that Iraq, in increasingly desperate economic straits because of U.N. sanctions imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, has unleashed the Mujahadeen again and may even be seeking to divert Iraqis' attention from their plight by engineering a border crisis.

Britain's Queen Mother leaves hospital

ABERDEEN (R) — Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, the 92-year-old widow of King George VI, left hospital Sunday after an operation to remove a throat obstruction and told well-wishers she felt "very well." One of the British royal family's most popular members, the Queen Mother had been staying on the Balmoral estate in Scotland when she was rushed to Aberdeen hospital last Thursday evening after experiencing difficulty swallowing. As she left Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, she told a group of well-wishers who had gathered outside that she felt "very well," asked how she was feeling, she replied: "Much better thank you. Everybody has been so kind. They have been wonderful." The surgery last Thursday night removed a piece of food from her throat in an operation which caused concern in Britain because of her advanced age. The "Queen Mum", as she is popularly known, emerged from the hospital wearing a deep blue coat and hat. She smiled and waved to the crowd. She was said to be keen to resume her public engagements this week.

British royals 'collect farm subsidies'

LONDON (R) — Britain's royal family, among the richest in the world, is collecting hundreds of thousands of pounds in European Community farm subsidies, a newspaper reported Sunday. "The Queen and Prince (Charles) alone are set to receive nearly £300,000 (\$465,000) of taxpayers' money this year," the Sunday Express said. It said £60,000 (\$93,120) came from the EC's set-aside policy of paying farmers for not growing crops, which Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, had described as "the greatest monster in the labyrinth" of the Community's agricultural policy. It quoted an Agriculture Ministry source as saying the royal family was "meticulous about claiming every subsidy available." The newspaper said Ministry figures showed that Prince Charles could get £40,000 (\$62,080) in grants for his 1,112-acre (450-hectare) Highgrove farm in Gloucestershire in west England including £6,400 (\$9,933) in set-aside grants. Queen Elizabeth could claim grants worth £250,000 (\$388,000) for farming 3,600 acres (1,460 hectares) at her Sandringham estate in eastern England including £50,880 (\$78,970) in set-aside grants, it added.

Tasmania gay laws hurt human rights, Amnesty says

SYDNEY (R) — Australia's commitment to human rights was being undermined by the outlawing of homosexuality in the island state of Tasmania, the human rights organisation Amnesty International said Sunday. Amnesty urged Tasmania to bring its anti-homosexuality laws, under which a person can be convicted for committing a homosexual act, into line with all the other states in the country. The United Nations Human Rights Committee said late last year it would investigate the state's anti-homosexual laws, which provide for a maximum 21 years' jail for sexual intercourse "against the order of nature." Next month's world conference on human rights provided Australia with an ideal opportunity to show its commitment to universal human rights by declaring its domestic agenda for action. National Amnesty President Liz Watson said, "Removing the homosexuality law would be a symbol of that commitment," she added.

Australia tackles high lead level

SYDNEY (R) — Australian authorities said Sunday they would clean up soil contaminated by lead in a mining town after a leaked report showed there was up to 67 times as much lead as is considered safe. The official report into lead contamination of New South Wales said some families might have to move to avoid a blood-lead buildup of lead in their blood. The soil report, published last week, followed tests last year on 230 30 per cent children which found their blood lead higher than recommended limits. The tests were carried out by New South Wales government scientists in the famous mining town, which has operated large lead and zinc mines since last century.

Izetbegovic slams peace efforts; Karadzic hails allies' plan

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Bosnian Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic rallied his people to defend their republic and slammed international peace efforts as "futile" Sunday but his Serb foes welcomed a new allied strategy on the war.

"We are not going to waste time any longer in futile negotiations," Mr. Izetbegovic said in a statement read out in Sarajevo.

He declared his government would call on "all our citizens who love this country... and call them to unite and use all means available to defend their sovereign and independent Bosnia-Herzegovina."

It was a fiery reaction to Saturday's announcement of a common strategy by the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Spain on containing the Bosnian war and promoting peace.

Muslim hopes for foreign military intervention to halt Serb advances after 14 months of fighting have all but evaporated with the new strategy.

But Bosnian Serb chieftain Radovan Karadzic welcomed the new policy as "realistic" and said he was calling for direct talks between Serbs, Muslims and Bosnian Croats to divide the former Yugoslav republic into three confederated states.

Mr. Karadzic told Reuters by telephone from the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale that Serbs and Croats could help the Bosnian Muslims establish "a viable state" in central Bosnia.

"I am inviting Izetbegovic and (Bosnian Croat leader Mate) Boban for direct face-to-face talks concerning territorial issues," Mr. Karadzic said.

He praised U.S. President Bill Clinton and said he was "going to be a great president" for avoiding being pushed into military intervention in the Bosnian civil war.

The allies agreed measures including using U.S. air power if

United Nations safe havens for Muslims are attacked and ensuring arms supplies do not get through to Bosnian Serbs and Croats from their ethnic kin across borders.

Rejection by Mr. Izetbegovic was sure to scuttle the plan, announced by U.S. Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher and the foreign ministers of Russia, Britain, France and Spain.

"This new plan is absolutely unacceptable for us," said Mr. Izetbegovic, accusing the world of moving to "reward aggression and genocide."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

S. Korea arrests ex-president's in-law for fraud

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's anti-graft prosecutors arrested a powerful relative of ex-President Roh Tae-Woo on charges of receiving bribes, a Seoul prosecutor's office official said Sunday. He said United People's Party legislator Park Chul-Un was arrested late Saturday for accepting 500 million won (\$625,000) from slot machine "godfather" Chung Dok-Jin in return for persuading tax.

20 injured in Bangladesh clash

DHAKA (AP) — Students and police clashed at Dhaka University Sunday, leaving at least 20 persons injured, as Prime Minister Khaleda Zia arrived to give an honorary degree to a Nobel laureate. Police hurled tear gas and swung batons at students who were throwing stones and firecrackers, paralysing traffic inside the sprawling campus. The students, affiliated with opposition parties, were demanding subsidies, part-time jobs and guarantees of employment after they finish school. They also demanded action against "campus terrorism" a reference to the violence among students parties for control of residential dorms.

Thai police target engineers in fire

BANGKOK (R) — Thai police are investigating what role government engineers played in the toy factory fire that killed at least 188 people and injured scores more earlier this month, the Nation newspaper said Sunday. Provincial police chief Colonel Cheu Laoprasert was quoted as saying investigators had already questioned the public works chief who approved the factory's construction plans and more engineers could be implicated. "Several others were involved in the construction and the suspected illegal modifications," Mr. Cheu said. Arrest warrants have been issued for four executives of the toy company, Kader Industrial (Thailand) Co. Limited, on charges of negligence leading to death and injury and illegal modification of a building. Two have been released on bail. Bangkok is seeking the extradition of the other two from Hong Kong.

Pope tells Italian politicians to be honest

AREZZO, Italy (R) — Pope John Paul Sunday told the politicians of Italy, which is mired in a 15-month-old corruption scandal, that they had a duty to be honest. Speaking during a day trip to this Tuscan city the Pope said public administrators had a special responsibility to the people. "It is legitimate (for the public) to expect from them a well-defined behaviour of rectitude in the administration of the common good," he told thousands of people in a square here.

Aborigines may be compensated for lost land

QUEENSTOWN (AP) — Australian aborigines may be compensated by national and state governments for land taken from them during the last 18 years, visiting Prime Minister Paul Keating said Sunday. At the end of three-day official visit to New Zealand, Mr. Keating told reporters the compensation problem is one of many issues following a controversial Australian high court decision last year recognising that aborigines have "native title" to government-owned land. Mr. Keating said he will meet the leaders of six states and one territory next month to discuss how to deal with aboriginal land claims and promote racial reconciliation.

Philippine plane found 9 months after crash

MANILA (R) — Villagers have reported finding the wreckage of a Philippine air force plane with skeletons of crew and passengers still in their seats nine months after it went missing, the Philippines air force said Sunday. A spokesman said the twin-engine Britten Norman Islander, carrying an air force colonel and nine other people, disappeared in August after taking off from Manila for the southern city of Zamboanga. Previous searches had failed to locate the plane. Air Force chief Major-General Leopoldo Acot has ordered a search party to go to the mountains of Romblon Island, 270 kilometres south of the capital, where villagers said they saw the crashed plane, the spokesman said. "All the remained of the victims were their skeletons and the hair on their heads. They were still in their seats," the private Manila radio station DZXL said quoting a local guide who reached the crashed site.

Fight against AIDS in Jordan needs more internal cooperation

By V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has more or less managed well in coping with the global threat of AIDS, but officials believe that there should be more cooperation between private physicians and the authorities in detecting and following up cases of the fatal disease and its virus in the Kingdom.

The Ministry of Health has registered 86 cases of both full-blown AIDS as well as HIV infection in Jordan since Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome hit international headlines in 1986 as the most life-threatening yet to mankind in history.

But many cases could remain undetected because of the social shame that the conservative Jordanian society attaches to sex-related diseases, said Saad Kharabsheh, head of the Communicable Diseases Department of the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Kharabsheh noted that those afflicted with venereal diseases could have also exposed

themselves to AIDS, and should ideally undergo an AIDS screening as the case is with such patients seeking treatment at government hospitals. But it does not happen most of the time with private doctors, he said.

"Most people suffering from sex-related diseases approach private physicians for treatment for the specific ailment, which does not get reported to the authorities," Dr. Kharabsheh said.

"Very unfortunately, we have to say that the cooperation in this context between private doctors and the Ministry of Health is not up to the desired level," he said.

Of the total 86 cases registered so far in Jordan, 21, including Jordanians and non-Jordanians, are already dead, only 27 of the rest have developed full-blown AIDS, three are showing "AIDS-related complexes" — somewhere between being virus carriers and actual patients — and the rest have been positively identified as HIV carriers who could transmit the disease

through sexual contact while not necessarily contracting the disease themselves, Dr. Kharabsheh said.

The virus attacks the body's natural immune system, steadily weakening it and rendering it totally unresponsive to any medicine or treatment. As a result, a simple ailment could develop and claim the patient's life.

No cure has yet been developed anywhere, and the only prevention, as far as individuals are concerned, is "safe sex." Other safety shields are the responsibility of medical institutions such as using "safe" blood for transfusions and not allowing the same syringe to be used on two people.

Laboratories in Jordan conduct around 70,000 blood tests every year, and some of the cases were detected during routine checks.

Others came to light when foreign governments informed Jordan after deporting Jordanian nationals who were found to be carrying the virus.

A preliminary HIV test costs

around JD 4, and a "confirmatory test" costs JD 25, Dr. Kharabsheh said.

Dr. Kharabsheh said that as a rule any non-Jordanian found afflicted with the virus is immediately deported from the Kingdom. He noted that residence permits for foreigners are issued only after an AIDS screening.

He did not provide the nationalities of those dead or deported, but said they were mostly Arabs and Westerners. Seventy of the total reported since 1986 were male; 20 of the 27 fully-developed patients were also male, he said, adding that 70 per cent of all cases were within the 15-39 age group.

It has been found that 36 patients contracted the disease through blood transfusion abroad, Dr. Kharabsheh said.

Since six years ago Jordan did not import blood and the Kingdom's blood bank accepts blood donations only after thorough tests for HIV.

It has also been established that 32 of all cases contracted

the virus through sexual contact — heterosexual, homosexual and bi-sexual, said Dr. Kharabsheh, in the first public acknowledgement that blood transfusions abroad were not to be exclusively blamed for AIDS/HIV cases in Jordan.

"It is a reality and we might as well acknowledge it," he said.

(Prostitution, one main conduit for AIDS, is a subject that many officials in Jordan wave away and refuse to discuss. The first response from any official is typical: The oldest profession in the world does not exist in Jordan.)

Breaking the taboo, which many sociologists criticise as superficial and an escape from reality, Dr. Kharabsheh said:

"The very nature of the Jordanian society prevents us from having any estimate of prostitutes in the country. It may be low, it may be high, but there cannot be any denial of the fact that it exists in Jordan, just as any other country."

Four of the registered AIDS/HIV cases were found to have resulted from intravenous drug

usage, where syringes were shared, while one case was found to have been "vertically transmitted" — from mother to the child, Dr. Kharabsheh said.

"We have not been able to pinpoint how the rest — 13 patients — got the disease," he added. "Some of them are uncooperative in providing answers while others are not sure how they could have exposed themselves; but their behaviours were very risky in many areas."

Jordan has a national committee to combat AIDS representing most segments of the society.

The Ministry of Health, in coordination with the committee, offers counselling programmes for AIDS patients and HIV carriers on how to "face life and deal with various situations," Dr. Kharabsheh said.

"We keep close tabs on every case," he said. "The fact that they have AIDS or are carriers of the virus does not have any negative bearing on their national rights. They are entitled as anyone else to have

their rights protected and interests defended.

"At the same time, our first concern is to protect others — family members and others who might be exposed to them — from contracting the disease," he added.

Those who may have exposed themselves to the virus while dealing with the patient are screened immediately after diagnosis establishes AIDS or HIV, he said.

T. Unselling programme includes advice on how to conduct sex life, social and family behaviours, and dealing with ailment. Immediate family members are also given advice on how to deal with the patient.

"The advice also includes on how to bury when the patient is dead," Dr. Kharabsheh said.

Authorities give special attention to students heading for higher education abroad, making them aware of the AIDS threat and advising them how to expose themselves.

"Of course the best method is total abstinence from sex," he said.